Agamas
AND
South Indian Vaisnavism

By

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FOREWORD

It is an honour to be assigned the task of welcoming and introducing this massive work by the renowned scholar, Dr. V. Varadacharya. He has been working on this theme for decades with admirable thoroughness and the present publication embodies his lectures under the noble Trust in Honour of the memory of the great savant, Prof. M. Rangacharya. The Trust was brought into existence by the highly accomplished and venerated son of the professor, the late lamented Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran. The book is being brought out by the devoted and worthy cousin of the professor, Sri M. C. Krishnan. The book does promote the lofty goals of the Trust in a conspicuous measure

About the book itself, considering its vast scope, patient scholarship and meticulous documentation, it is hardly possible to pronounce a just and adequate estimate. Luckily, such is not the function of a foreword. The author starts with the giddy and dim heights of the Vedic religion and advances methodically to the delineation of recent Hindu philosophy and religion, which are dominated by the Agamas. The Recent Hinduism is Agamic in character, whether it be Sakta, Saiva or Vaisnava. Not that the hoary heritage of the Vedas, Upanishads, the Epics, Puranas and Smritis is discarded, but it is subsumed and concretized in the living traditions of practical Hinduism. Our author takes the treatment to further particularization and brings up to South Indian Vaisnavism.

The treatment is neatly introduced with a clear formulation of the subject-matter. The validity of the Agamas was sometimes questioned in the orthodox Hindu tradition itself and hence the question of their validity is considered critically

and exhaustively in the context of the vedic tradition. The dimensions of the Agamas, their classification and the principal schools of the Agamic religion receive their due consideration. This discussion arrives naturally at the second focal point of the work, the Vaisnava Agamas Their two-fold tradition, the Vaikhanasa and the Pancaratra, is taken up in all the required completeness We are given a full map of the Pancaratra texts How the spirit and doctrines of this Vaisnava agamic tradition penetrated Vaisnava literature in general is shown in great detail The living Hinduism of recent times centres round worship. The principles and techniques of worship in private and in temples receive ample description, not excluding the art and science of the construction and maintenance of temples and the icons to be adored in them. How this conception and practice of religion deeply entered into the actual life of the people in all aspects is brought out in the concluding chapters.

The book, one may say, errs in its abundance. But it welds the bewildering mass of data into an integrated design. All the old sources and all the writings on the Agamas by modern writers are noticed and judiciously put to use. By far this is the weightiest modern treatment of the Agamas. While thanking the publishers, we are to hope for the right reception to this altogether solid contribution.

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PREFACE

The following pages contain an account of the origin, growth and development of the Agamas with special reference to the Vaisnava kind. They are written after a deep study of the original texts of the Vaikhanasa and Pancaratra.

Interest was aroused in me for a study of the Vaisnava Agamas, when I went through Otto Schrader's Introduction to the Pancaratra and Ahirbudhnyasamhita and the Sanskrit introduction to the Lakshmitantra edition of the Adyar Library written by my revered father Pandit V. Krishnamacharya. These two are the only invaluable and authoritative sources for the proper understanding of the Vaisnava Agamas.

While making a progressive study of the Vaisnava Agamas, I received a call from late Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran to deliver three lectures at Triplicane under the auspices of Prof M Rangacharya Memorial Trust on Agamas and South Indian Vaisnavism. Accordingly the lectures were delivered by me

Soon after, late Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran suggested to me to prepare a work on the topic of the lectures delivered I agreed and began preparing to gather more information and details on this subject. Late Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran asked me frequently to clarify certain problems which are necessarily to be solved and settled satisfactorily. This was really a hard task, since I could find neither a scholar who could be of help to me for suggesting the means to serve this end nor any standard work, but for the two works (the latter is only an introduction) which inspired me for taking up a study of the Agamas. I did not lose heart but managed to have

the matters cleared with the help of these two works and the standard samhitas of the Vaikhanasa and Pancaratra. Therefore the credit should go to late Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran for much of the contents and their treatment in this work.

While writing on this topic, certain matters crop up demanding solutions that could have a veracity like that of the already settled issues. With the available evidences no solution could be arrived at. The evidences could only be studied and conclusions be drawn for the time being, allowing subsequent alteration when more acceptable and satisfactory evidences become available.

To start with, mention must be made of the nature of beginnings of systems and schools such as Music, Dance, Drama, Grammar, Arthasastra, Silpa, Puranas, Kalpasutras and others. Eminent sages have their names associated with these, sometimes the same name occurring for more than one branch or school. The sages could have been related to each other as master and pupil or indebted mutually or bearing mutual influence. So the schools are taken to be interrelated and interdependent too in some respect. When the idea of the whole could have thus prevailed, it is not proper to treat one system as fully derived from another, unless there is direct evidence in support of it. The question of Sakta agama alone to have been the precursor of other kinds of Agamas should therefore be treated as idle. Equally baseless should be the reason that agama should have had its home in India or outside India. With our limited knowledge of the situations in the remote periods, it is too early to be dogmatic for suggesting a period or periods for the origin of the Agamas.

Suggestions have been made by some writers that the Agamas are antivedic and should have risen under the impact of the ways of life of the aborigines of India. It is to be

observed here that borrowing, whether, linguistic, religious or cultural, is always from those who are spiritually and morally superior or politically dominant in power: minor impacts could have been there on the cultured class coming from the tribes but wholesale concept of the Agama way of worship could not have emanated from the tribes: the Agamas must therefore be treated as supplementary to the Vedas.

Ever since the Agama mode of life and worship came into vogue, there were host of writers on the Smrtis and Puranas to denounce it as unauthoritative and anti-Vedic. However, the Agama mode has come to stay stabilised and getting intertwined with the Vedic practices. The reference to the linga in the Taittiriyaranyaka 10. 43-47 should be taken to point to the prevalence of offering worship to the symbol (pratika) which is as valid as Yantra representing a stage prior to the evolution of idol (pratima)

Then there are the compositions of the Alvars. There are shrines whose glory is sung by them and recorded in the Nalayiradivyaprabandham. There are also the Agama texts. Among these, the temples should been in existence for a long period before 7th century A.D. when the Alvars sang their glory. The structures in most of these huge shrines, which were built following the sculptural and Agamic directions, should be placed at a period later than the Alvars. Whether these temples were built according to the Agama directions cannot be proved with any degree of certainty. The shrines at Paramesvaravinnagaram, Tirukkottiyur, Kudalur, Srirangam and others reveal through their structures, that they bear the Agamic influences. This cannot be said of other shrines Besides, the two important and well known shrines at Srirangam and Tirumalai have their vimanas named Pranavakara and Anandanilaya. Neither the Silpasastra nor the Agama texts envisage the erection of the vimana of these kinds. It must be therefore, be taken that the

Agama texts were not as ancient as the compositions of the Alvars and that even when they became composed, they did not have their full impact on temple constructions.

It is equally unsound to agree with the idea that the Vedas do not contain reference to female deities who became introduced later into the epics. The Taittiriyasamhita (1-8-6-1) refers to Siva as Ambikapati. The name Ambika occurs as, the name of the deity That like Siva, she could not have received worship in the form of idol is another point.

The Vaikhanasa system is more ancient than Pancaratra [illegible] [illegible], Bhrgu and others were the direct pupils of Vikhanas. Yet, the texts which are now available under the authorship of these are not in a language suggestive of an ancient kind. They must be placed thus in the period about 6th or 7th century A.D

Regarding Pancaratra texts, the ancient ones do not contain reference to temples or idols there. They contain much useful material regarding Jnana, Cosmology, Vyuha, Yantra, Mantra and Yaga. The order among the texts may not be fixed as a text, supposed to be earlier mentions the text claimed to be later Yet, Jayakhya, Laksmitantra, Ahirbudhnyasamhita, Paramasamhita, Pauskara and Sattvata can be taken at present as having been composed in this order

Concepts and theories of Visistadvaita on the philosophical sphere impressed the Vaisnava community to a very high degree Temple worship has been, however, very popular. The result of this has been that the later texts on the Agamas ignored to a great extent the value of Jnana and Yoga padas and paid much attention to the treatment of Kriya and Carya aspects, as temple construction and worship of the idols found much favour with the people.

With all the rich and ancient back ground of the Agamas, it is strange to note that both the Vaisnava Agamas are in vogue and practised only in South India, with few exceptions in some places in North India. The Vaikhanasa is less known in the North than the Pancaratra. The reason must be found in the far more numerous Visnu shrines situated in South India celebrating as glorified by the Alvars.

These observations made above have validity only for the present. Deeper study of each of the Vaisnava Agama text, when undertaken will throw much light on many of these issues requiring modification and alteration for the concepts and theories now held as belonging to this Agama tradition I have the feeling that whatever is necessary is not left out in this work. At most, this work could be treated as source book for further study to be undertaken on the subject.

It is sad that Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran is no more to see this work released. I could not forget his repeated utterances of encouragement and support for completing this work. I should thank also Sri M. C. Krishnan, the publisher for his painstaking efforts to see the work through the press.

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February, 1982.

Srimate Rāmānujaya Namah

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The printing of this book, *Āgamas and South Indian Vaiṣṇavism*, had almost been completed when a cruel fate intervened and snatched away Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran. It is amidst the gloom of his demise that I am compelled to write this note

Three lectures on this subject were delivered during February 1974 by Dr. V. Varadachari, currently of Institut Francaise D'Indologic, Pondicherry, under the auspices of Prof. M Rangacharya Memorial Trust (endowed by his dutiful son, the late Prof M R Sampatkumaran). The revision of these lectures for being printed and the necessary time required for editing and printing carefully a book of this bulk accounts for the long delay in bringing it out.

The scope of this work and its approach to the subject has been briefly, yet very succinctly, explained by Prof. S S. Raghavachar in his foreword. The authenticity of the Āgamas has been questioned from about the beginning of the Christian era. The objection is based only on one point viz , worship of God based on the supposed non-Vedic character of the Āgamas which recommend strongly the worship of particular deities in an exclusive manner Idol worship marks the Agamic mode of worshipping God. The objections against the validity of the Āgamas have been refuted by Yāmuna in his great work *Āgama Prāmāṇya* and Rāmānuja has made good use of the Āgama texts in his exposition of the philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita.

The Āgamas glorify several deities and there appear to have been certain Āgamas of the *nāstika* kind too. In course of time only the *Śākta*, *Śaiva* and *Vaiṣṇava* Āgamas survived and the rest became extinct. In this book Dr. V. Varadachari has ably dealt elaborately on various Āgama texts and has devoted detailed attention and emphasis, particularly on Vaiṣṇava

Āgamas and the nature of worship in Vaiṣṇavaite temples and their effect on the religious life of the devotees of Viṣṇu in South India The width and the depth of scholarship called for in making such a study of the subject may very well be judged from the works listed out in the Index. Dr. V. Varadachari has done more than real service in bringing into focus the Āgama literature which had not so far been dealt with in a scientific manner.

Readers may be aware that this Trust has been, in its own humble way, making significant contributions to the study and propagation of the philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita, and the present publication, the fifth in the series, is in fulfilment of a commitment made in 1977 at the time of publishing the earlier work, *Sri Ramanuja's Philosophy and Religion* by Dr. P. B. Vidyarthi.

It remains for me to express my thanks to Dr. V. Raghavan and Sri C. S. Parthasarathy Iyengar (both of them are no longer with us) and Prof. A. N. Parasuram who presided on the three days of the lectures and conducted the proceedings. I am greatly indebted to Prof. S. S. Raghavachar, who, in spite of failing health had been good enough to write the foreword in his inimitable style. The Triplicane Cultural Academy associated itself with the lectures and the authorities of Sri Yadugiri Yatiraja Mutt, Triplicane, Madras, kindly allowed the use of their hall for the lectures I am under obligations to all who helped in the printing of this book and to Sri M. A. Thirumalachari and Sri A. Thanigachalam in particular. I cannot sufficiently express my thanks to Sri M. N. Parthasarathy, M.A., Secretary, Sri Ramanuja Vedanta Centre, Madras, for his assistance in getting this book ready

February, 1982. M. C. KRISHNAN.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XI

Āgamas and South Indian Vaisnavism

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The *Vedas* represent the earliest extant literature in the world They are four, under the names of *Rgveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda* and *Atharvaveda* They record many aspects of the life of the people of ancient India whose religious beliefs and aspirations left an indelible mark on their social life. Indeed, the religious and social aspects became inextricably mixed up with each other But it must not be forgotten that the *Vedas* deal primarily with the religious beliefs and practices of ancient India

Whether the *Vedas* are regarded as eternal as Hindu tradition believes, or as composed by a number of authors at different periods and then codified, it must be admitted that the concept of the Deity must have been an article of faith long before the ancient Indians felt any urge to offer worship There was also the realization that man has to depend on the Deity for protection from danger and distress and for a secure and happy life. To evoke response from a deity when a person offered his prayer to gain any particular objective, or to offer thanksgiving for the fulfilment of the prayer, an offering of what that person had with him was made Usually, the offering was made in the sacred fire which was believed to convey it to the deity concerned The prayers are recorded in the *Rgveda* and the ways and means of the offerings to be made are treated in the *Yajurveda*. The *Sāmaveda* helped in chanting those prayers so as to attract the Deity As for the *Atharvaveda*, it provided the people with the means to protect themselves against enemies and evil forces.

The Indian community in the earliest period does not seem to be very different from our society today in the attitude to life and in basic feelings and aspirations The sufferings endured by the people from time to time were then regarded as the effects of past deeds Thus there is a reference to the sense of guilt [1] It was considered that sufferings could be overcome by the grace of the deity [2] Hatred, disease and distress afflicted them.[3] God was looked upon as a physician whose presence was yearned after by the sufferers in order that they might get medicines [4] God's good-will was sought after [5] and appeals were made for this purpose.[6] Long life, co-operation among people and with God, prosperity, valorous sons and good food [7] are the cherished desires frequently expressed in the prayers offered to the deities.

The ancient Indians were quite aware of the nature of the deities. They practised meditation on the gods It was claimed that the particular deity on whom the meditator fixed his thinking faculties appeared before him **This created a sound reflex in the meditator. The ecstasy which the meditator then felt gave rise to a musical setting to this sound reflex** This came to be known as '*mantra*'. It contained a picture of the deity in the language known to the meditator The *mantra* had several phases like praises [8] invocations [9] directions [10] deliberations,[11] bewailings,[12] questions [13] answers,[14] and

1. *RV* VII 86 3 5
2 *Ibid* VII 86 2
3. *Ibid* II 33 2, 3
4. *Ibid* II 33 4 ; VII. 7. 1-2
5 *Ibid* II 33 6
6 *Ibid* II 33 4
7 *Ibid* I 89 2, *SY* VII 17; *RV* I 11 2, II 33 1, 14, IV. 50 11, *SV Purvarcika* V 6 6.
8 *RV* I 1. 1
9 *SV* I. 1.
10 *TS.* VI 6 1 2.
11. *RV* X 129 5.
12. *SY.* XXIII. 18.
13. *Ibid* XXIII 61.
14. *Ibid.* XXIII. 62

others God then became identical with the *mantra*. Many deities appeared thus to the same or various meditators and thus many *mantras* came into existence. Those *mantras* which were of the nature of praise were also called *ṛks*[15] Some of these *mantras* were used with or without change when set to music and sung and when making offerings to the deities concerned. The meditator is thus a seer of the *mantra* (*mantradraṣṭṛ*) and not its author Those who have realized this are known as the *ṛṣis* for the particular *mantras* Hence some sages are considered as the *ṛṣis* for some *ṛks*

The word '*mantra*' is considered to have been connected with the faculty of thinking which is the sense of the root '*man*' or '*matri*'[16] When the *ṛks* occur in the *Vedic* texts for employment in sacred rites, they no longer have the denotation of the faculty of thinking. Besides, certain passages which convey senses other than thinking, are also called *mantras* So, it is held that whichever passage is specifically mentioned in the *Vedic* texts as *mantra* must be named as such[17]

Regarding the concept of God and the characteristic features of deities in the *Rgveda*, the scholars of the West contend that the religion of the *Rgveda* represents that of a primitive society marked by the "spontaneous emotioaal reactions of wonder, awe and fear evoked in man by natural phenomena such as the wind, the sun and the moon. Impressed by these powerful and inexplicable forces of Nature, primitive man reacted with emotional attitudes and behaviour to which"

15 For the definition of *Rk*, *Sāman* and *Yajus*, see Jaimini's *Pūrvamīmāmsā Sūtras*, II 1 35-37.

16 The root '*matri*' has the sense of 'secret talk' (*gupta-paribhāṣana*) It seems that the word '*mantra*' must have been derived from this root The seer (*mantradraṣṭṛ*) who received the *mantra* was the only person who had received it and none else He alone had the sound reflex and the sense of the root '*matri*' is applicable here

17 Vide Sāyana's *Upodghāta* to his *Rgvedabhāsya* (p. 35)

the name 'religion' is given[18] Personification of the supernatural and the anthropomorphic concepts of Nature are also held to have given rise to the idea of God in primitive society[19] Some scholars are of opinion that the *Vedic* culture was influenced by magic acts, fertility rites and other primitive manifestations of religion The performance of these was intended to stimulate or propitiate the powers of Nature and so was considered as an obligatory duty. A study of primitive culture is thus quite essential for understanding *Vedic* culture[20]

These findings of the Western scholars could be accepted, if the *Rgveda* contains any evidence to support them A society which is called primitive is distinguished from a civilized one and, on this ground, is held to be inferior to the latter In order to avoid this kind of attitude towards that society, the word 'preliterate' is often used by modern writers.

Certainly the society and culture as depicted in the *Rgveda* are not primitive There are certain features which belong only to primitive society and none of them are traceable in the *Rgveda* There is nothing like the '*mana*' of the Polynesians, the '*maniton*' of the North Americans, tyrannical practices characterized by cruelty and rough behaviour, head-hunting for achieving a greater status, tattoo, taboos and totemism These are negative pieces of evidence to prove that the religion of the *Vedas* is not primitive

On the other hand, there are substantial pieces of evidence to show that society in the *Vedic* period was civilized Family life is well depicted with people striving for and living a happy

18. Edward Norbeck · *Religion in Primitive Society* p 24.

19 Macdonell · *A Vedic Reader for Students*, Introduction, p xviii ; Max Müller. *What can India teach us ?* p 160

20. Cf J Gonda ; ' Some Observations on the Relation between gods and powers in the *Veda apropos* of the phrase, *sahasah sūnuḥ* " pp. i-iv, 1-107, S. Gravenhage.

and prosperous life[21] The ideal of a *rāstra* was quite familiar to the people of that period[22] Homes, gatherings, garments and the use of horses and chariots are frequently referred to, suggesting an advanced and developed society on the material plane[23] Words[24] like *cāru*, *sumangalīḥ*, *saubhagatva* and others bring out the aesthetic sense of that society Fine poetry,[25] with attractive similes, points to the literary excellence of the *Rgveda*

Culturally, the standard of the *Rgveda* marks a well advanced stage of society Acts of worship and prayer, accompanied by offerings, convey the friendly attitude of the people towards the deities The relation between a devotee and his god as described reveals reciprocal affection and familiarity between them[26] This can be compared only to the relation which is noticed in the cult of *bhakti* of later days Lastly, lofty ideals of culture are suggested in the prayers offered by the people[27] All these show that the culture and religion of the *Vedas* were well advanced and so could not have belonged to a primitive society.

Supernaturalism is an important element of religion, It is a belief that there is a reality over and above the forces of Nature This reality is acknowledged by both preliterate and civilized societies. So the worship of this reality as manifested in Nature cannot be treated as worship of Nature or anthropomorphism or personification of natural phenomena. Neither the cosmic experience nor the awe and fear evoked in man by natural phenomena could be taken as having given rise to the

21 *RV* X. 34, 85
22, *Ibid* IV 42. 1 ; X 125
23 *Ibid* X 168
24 *Ibid* I 34 5 , III 8 2 , X 85 33,
25 *Ibid* I 85 7 , 1 113 , I 10; III. 8. 9 ; 39. 1 , IV. 51, 8 , 5 83 , V 11 6 , 6 64 , X 71 2
26 *Ibid* III 59 3 , VI 54 4 , VII, 71 6 , VIII. 48 9
27 *Ibid*. VI 52. 5 , X. 37. 7 ; *SY*. XL. 16 ; *Bṛ. Up*. I. 2. 28.

origin of religion. Faith in the deity as governing the moral order must be taken as accounting for its rise.

Even if we concede that magic arts could have been responsible for the rise of culture and religion in a primitive society, it has no relevance for *Vedic* culture. The *Ṛgveda* does not have any direct reference to such acts Whatever references are there, suggestive of such practices in the *Rgveda*, and, more so, in the *Yajurveda*, may be deemed as survivals from a hoary past. The *Atharvaveda* does contain many references to them. It would be reasonable to take the major portion of the *Atharvaveda* as compiled long before the *Rgveda*, but on this account it would not be proper to trace the origin of religion to magic

Not only were the ancient people aware of the concept of the deity, but they had also knowledge of the distinct traits of several gods Indra is depicted as a warrior, Agni and Bṛhaspati as priests and Rudra and Aśvins as physicians. Some deities are depicted as passing through the air in their chariots drawn by steeds[28] Their limbs and ornaments are frequently referred to as dazzling.[29] They are offered seats made of sacred grass,[30] and served with milk, butter, grain and flesh of sheep and other animals[31] The *soma* juice is frequently stated to be an offering to deities[32]

Such descriptions show that a particular god was conceived in the manner in which he presented himself to the seers and that each deity had some definite features with which he was identified. Sometimes, while a particular deity is glorifed, another deity is also brought in and extolled together with the

28. *R. V.* I. 35. 3, 5 , II 12. 7 , IV 51. 5 , V. 83, 6 , VII. 71 3.
29. *Ibid.* I 34, 9, 10 , II. 33. 9.
30. *Ibid* I. 85. 6 , V. 11. 2 ,
31, *Ibid.* II. 33. 5 , II. 35. 12 , III. 59. 1 , IV. 50, 6. 10 , VII, 63. 5,
32. *Ibid.* II 12. 14.

former[33] This is taken by the Orientalists as a feature of *Vedic* deities whose "figures are indefinite in outline and deficient in individuality".[34] However, it is difficult to agree with this view Rudra is referred to as 'Kapardin',[35] which word means one who has matted hair He is depicted as having the bow, Pināka,[36] in the hand The word, '*pratimā*',[37] occurs in the sense of the form of the god who is to receive the oblation. It is not therefore proper to hold that the deities of the *Vedas* did not have definite forms at all and much more inaccurate is it to treat the Vedic deities as lacking in individuality The deities must have appeared before the seers with their distinct features which were identifiable to them and which were described by them in expressions with which they were quite familiar.

Though the gods appeared before sages through *mantras* and were depicted by them, they went out of sight afterwards. When the sacrifice was required to be performed in honour of a deity, the singers of the *ṛks* had to invoke that deity[38] The *ṛk* which was already available, had to be recited and chanted. The seat of grass was already prepared for the god to arrive there and occupy it.[39] This is enough proof to hold that the

33 *R V* IV 57 10, 11 where Indra is jointly mentioned with Bṛhaspati, VII 63 3. 5, 6 for Mitra, Varuna and Savitṛ, cf I 35, 1, 7, 1. 88, II 33 2, V 83 6, 6. 54, VI. 49 3, 4, VII 61, VIII. 29.

34. *Vedic Reader for Students* Introduction, p xix

35. *RV*. I 114. 1, 5, VI. 55 2, VII 83 8; IX 67 11

36. *SY* III 61, XVI 51, *TS* I 8 6. 2, Cf *SY* XVI 7 where he is referred to as blue-necked.

37 *RV* IX 130 3 The word occurs here in the sense of the deity. A question is put as to who the deity is Sāyaṇa explains the word thus, 'Devatā haviṣpatiyogitvena mīyate nirmīyate iti pratimā' The answer for this is contained in the next hymn where the deity is mentioned as Savitṛ. This does not convey the sense of the idol and, as such, the word '*pratimā*' cannot be taken here to convey that sense

38 *RV*. II 33 5; VII. 71 2, 3, 4.

39. *Ibid*. I. 85. 7, V. 11. 2.

Vedic seers were aware of the possession of physical forms by the gods. Yet the *Vedas* do not contain a specific description of the person of the deity. This is clear from the role that Agni played in sacrifices. Agni is considered as the bearer of oblations to the gods, which means that the gods did not appear in person to receive the offerings. This made the *Mīmāṃsā* schools of thought argue that a god is only *mantra* and there is no god apart from it.[40] Supreme significance came to be attached to the scrupulous attention to be paid to the uttering of *mantras* without the least inaccuracy.[41]

While the concept of divinity was developing on these lines, there must have been growing another tendency to evolve a different concept of the deity, of course basing it on the teachings of the *Vedas*.[42] The *hotṛ*, *adhvaryu*, *udgātṛ* and *brahman*, who were all connected with the performance of a *Vedic* ritual, were perhaps the only persons who were content with the identification of *mantras* with the gods. Perhaps, those who assisted them also held the same view. Others who were Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas, and did not have actual participation in such performances, might have remained content with this concept of God. The *Vedāntins*, however, refuted it, admitting physical forms for the deities.[43]

Long before the development of the *Itihāsas* and *Purānae* there must have been an intense yearning on the part of the people to visualise the one supreme God in person. God however would not present Himself to one and all for the mere

40 *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol III, p 166

41. Vide *Pāninīyaśikṣā* 52, where the dangers of mispronouncing words in respect of syllables or accentuation are affirmed, citing the example of the disaster to the sacrificer who misplaced the accents in pronouncing the word, "*Indraśatru*".

42 *Chānd. Up.* IV. 16. 2.

43. This is discussed in the *Devatādhikaraṇa* of the *Brahmasūtras*, I. 3. 25-29. See also Yāska's *Nirukta*, VII. 6, 7.

asking, and so the followers of the *Vedic* tradition must have been seriously considering a way to attain their cherished objective.

Again, though gods and men appear to be friendly according to the *Vedic* tenets, there is no direct evidence in them to prove that man had an intense longing to visualize the one Supreme God. That is, the doctrine of *bhakti* does not appear to have developed then. Those who performed the sacrifices had only the awareness of their dependence on the gods for protection and security. They and those also who did not actually participate in the ritualistic performances, should have had the concept of a Supreme God and even might have developed a strong desire to see Him in person. It is this intense liking that ripened later into *bhakti*.

Besides, there were Śūdras who formed the majority of the population. There were also women who represented nearly half the people. Both these were not qualified for the study of the *Vedas* and for that reason had no competence to have the fitness to perform the rituals. They were not however, living in the dark. In a way, they should have known what God is. Belonging to the same community, they must have had abiding faith in what the sacrificers believed. It must be no surprise if they, too, along with the men of the twice-born castes, cherished a deep longing to visualize God.

It is to satisfy the yearnings of these that the *Āgamas* were brought into being. The word '*āgama*' suggests that they came later than the *Vedas*[44]. They are held to be intrinsically valid for the following reasons. First, they are based on what the *Vedas* teach. What is adumbrated in the *Vedas* receives an elaborate exposition in the *Āgamas*. Secondly, the promulgators of the

44. This may also indicate that they were brought from a different place since '*ā*' means motion towards a particular place from a different one.

Āgamas are either the gods themselves or sages of great credibility who were steeped in the *Vedic* tradition. Further, the *Āgamas* contain references to the *Vedas* and enjoin the adoption of *Vedic mantras*

The word '*āgama*' is derived from the root, '*gam*', with the preposition '*ā*'. The sense of this root, which means 'to go', may also be 'moving (mentally) towards an object which is to be gained'. In this sense, the word conveys the same meaning as the word '*veda*'. Besides, as the preposition '*ā*' gives this root the sense of motion in the reverse direction, the word '*āgama*' can be taken to imply the handing down of knowledge from teacher to pupil, and thus to denote traditional (*sampradāya*) knowledge. Then the word '*āgama*' can be taken to mean what the *Āgamas* stand for.

The *Āgamas* are also known as *Tantras*. The word '*tantra*' is derived in two ways. According to one view it is from the root, '*tan*', to spread, with the *uṇādi* suffix, '*ṣṭran*'.[45] Hence some scholars[46] suggest that '*tantra*' means the spreading out of the cosmic energy in the person who practises it. Others[47] take it in the sense of a system which elaborates the knowledge evidently acquired from the *Vedas*. To vindicate the validity of their system, the writers on *Tantra* seek to split the word as '*tan*' and '*tra*' (spreading and saving), so as to mean that *Tantra* gives an exposition of the matters taken up in the system and also saves the aspirants who follow it from bondage.[48] The

45 *Vide*. *Sarvadhātubhyaḥ ṣṭran* (498)

46. This sense is based on the root '*tan*' to spread, which must be with reference to something centred in a particular place The system of *Tantra* believes that the universal energy is latent in the individual He has to practise *yoga* and enable his energy to issue forth from his body.

47. *Shakti and Shakta*, p 17.

48 Vide

तनोति विपुलानर्थान् तन्त्रमन्त्रसमन्वितान् ।
त्राणं च कुरुते यस्मात्तन्त्रमित्यभिधीयते ॥

(*Kāmikāgama*. *Tantrāntara Paṭala*)

word is also traced to the root '*tatri*' which means sustaining or lending support, and hence can be taken in the sense of offering an exposition[49] Yet others take it to mean understanding,[50]

The word, '*tantra*', occurs in the sense of a *śāstra*,[51] as evidenced by the titles of works like *Ṣaṣṭitantra Tantravārttika* and others. It has acquired a specific sense in this literature. It does not mean any *śāstra*, but only the *Tāntrika* system.

An attempt is also sought to be made to specify the purposes served by the *Agama* and *Tantra* The *Āgama* provides the aspirant with knowledge and *Tantra* saves him from bondage.[52]

आज्ञा वस्तु समस्तञ्च गम्यत इत्यागमो मतः ।
तनुते त्रायते नित्यं तन्त्रमित्थं विदुर्बुधाः ॥

(*Piṅgalāmata* quoted in *Tantras: Studies in their Religion and Literature*, p 2).

However, the two names have come to signify the same system whose validity is held to be on a par with the *Vedas*, *Smṛtis* and *Purāṇas* It is held that the *Āgamas* have special importance and validity in the *Kaliyuga*.

कृते श्रुत्युक्त आचारस्त्रेतायां स्मृतिसंभवः ।
द्वापरे तु पुराणोक्तः कलावागमसम्मतः ॥

(*Kulārṇavatantra*)

49 *Tatri* is taken here as the basis.

50 Īśānaśivagurudeva commentary on the *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati*: III p 28.

51. *Vide*--*Kāśikāvṛtti* on the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (VII. 2 9) *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra* (XV 3) uses the word in this sense. Cf

तन्त्रमितरेतराभिसम्बद्धस्यार्थसमूहस्योपदेशः शास्त्रम्

(*Nyāyabhāṣya*, I. 1. 28)

52. For a fairly long list of matters dealt with in the *Tantra*, see the *Śabdakalpadruma*, p 165 and *Vācaspatya*, pp 616-618 and for the *Āgama*, *Śabdakalpadruma*, pp. 584-6 and *Vācaspatya*, pp. 3223-3227.

The *Āgamas* have an independent development of theory and practice and should be taken as a system of philosophy and religion based on the *Vedas.* The theoretical side represents a continuation of the results of philosophical enquiries which the *Vedas* deal with. The controversies and discussions which mark these enquiries are left out in the *Āgamas.* Greater attention is paid here to the cultural discipline which is sought to be inculcated through practical religion.

The matters which the *Āgamas* treat of could be brought under four heads, namely, *jñāna*, ··-a, *kriyā* and *caryā*, which stand respectively for the knowlec reality, yogic pract'ces for the realisation of the Ultimate Reality, preparation of materials and their collection for the worship of the · the religious practices.

The *Saṁhitā* and *Brāhmaṇa* portions of the *Vedas* could be taken to form a unit containing a rich development of the concept of God who is to be worshipped through the performance of sacrifices. The various hymns of the *Ṛgveda* were evolved at different periods in praise of the deities and found ritualistice use in portions of the *Yajurveda* and *Sāmaveda* which had relevance to the propitiation of particular deities through sacrifices in which particular hymns were to be recited. The explanatory portions of the particular rituals, which had relevance, are found in the *Brāhmaṇas* forming an integral part of those *Ṛgvedic* hymns that were employed for the purpose It is only later that Vyāsa edited the mass of *Vedic* literature into the four *Vedas*, and the corresponding *Saṃhitā*, *Brahmaṇa*, *Āraṇyaka* and *Upaniṣad* portions.

The hymns of the *Ṛgveda* were classified by Vyāsa in a particular order, taking into account the importance of the roles of the deities in the hymns. The first hymn which is in praise of Agni, was not composed at first and so was not the earliest. Any offering which is made to any god is to be made only in the sacred fire, and so Agni is extolled in this hymn

which Vyāsa placed at the beginning for that purpose. The concept of any deity cannot therefore be taken to represent an earlier or later stage simply on the ground whether or not he is extolled in the so called nuclear portion of the *Rgveda* In fact, which the nuclear portion is and which it is not, cannot be now discussed and decided, for the present classification was made by Vyāsa long after the *Vedas* were compiled.

Two major aspects of the concept of the deity emerge when the hymns of the *Rgveda* and others are given a thorough study. One is that all deities are not different and distinct from one another, but represei y several forms of a single Divine ing[53] It is because of this aspect that the features revealed depiction of some deities overlap All the deities are real. Th the monotheistic tendency prevailed in the *Vedic* literature as such. To represent the *Vedic* religion as polytheism or henotheism is only to ignore this main aspect of the concept of the Deity The *Āranyakas* and *Upanisads* contain speculations and discussions on this concept. The second aspect is that God is the soul of the mobile and immobile worlds, representing the embodied living beings and inert matter respectively[54] These two aspects became the foundations of theism as developed in the different schools of Hindu religion

There grew up a literature, during the period of the development of sacred literature represented in the *Brāhmaṇas* which took the shape of narratives, anecdotes and epics. This was concerned with a critical enquiry into the nature, activities and relative positions of the various gods The concept of a single divine Being was subjected to serious elucidation,

53. *Cf. R. V.* I. 164, V. 4. 1, X 121 Vide.
एक आत्मा बहुधा स्तूयते । अन्या देवताः प्रत्यङ्गानि भवन्ति
Nirukta, VII 4.

54. Vide:
सूर्य आत्मा जगतस्तस्थुषश्च । (*R. V.* I. 115. 1)

resulting in the identification of this Being. Agni and Indra were, of course, the chief deities in the Ṛgvedic hymns. Yet, Viṣṇu and Rudra did not have insignificant positions, as imagined by foreign scholars. It may be admitted that they were not favoured as against Agni, Indra and Varuṇa. The hymns addressed to these two contain what could be taken to be suggestive of the intimate relationship of the people with them. The narratives and episodes did not undermine the prominence of Agni and Varuṇa or Indra, but were in favour of the exclusive worship of Viṣṇu or Rudra.

The *Āgamas* presuppose this aspect of the development of the concept of God. Other deities are not treated as unreal. They are not, however, as eminent as Viṣṇu or Rudra. In fact, they are of secondary significance, and are generally treated as forming parts of the retinue of Viṣṇu or Rudra. The *Āgamas* arose in this way and their emphasis on the personal nature of God marked them out. They became classified, according to the deity exclusively glorified in each.

A god treated as supreme cannot be conceived of as a mere Absolute, nor as one who is to be propitiated for a definite purpose like obtaining rains, security from enemies or the elements of Nature, or prosperity of a particular kind. For these purposes, the worship of particular deities is commended, but this does not by any means lend support to any pre-eminent position for these deities. As a result of the development of the worship of the principal deities as recorded in the epics, *Purāṇas* and other ancient literature, the *Āgamas* evolved the cult of a single deity to the exclusion of all others. He came to be looked upon as pre-eminent in the sense that he not only overshadowed the greatness and might of other gods, but also had enough power to fulfil the aspirations of his worshippers. This trend is already noticed in some of the *Purāṇas*, like the *Viṣṇu*, *Bhāgavata*, *Skānda* and others.

Whether Viṣṇu or Rudra is admitted to be the pre-eminent God, it is necessary to recognize Him as endowed with

enormous potentialities and capacities to keep every thing under His control, to create the world and maintain it, affording protection and security to created beings. The *Āgamas* therefore conceive of God as powerful (*śakta*) The power (*śakti*) which God possesses is not external to Him, for in that case His relationship to and control over it will have to be explained, which may lead to the undesirable admission of power (*śakti*) being independent of God For this reason, the *Āgamas* recognize God as never dissociated from power This power is not inert like primordial matter (*prakṛti*); in which case, it should occupy a very subordinate position in relation to God. Hence the *Āgamas* describe this power (*śakti*) as animate. The feminine gender of the word, '*śakti*', suggests that this should be a goddess ever associated with God as His consort. As such, this goddess is named differently as Lakṣmī, Durgā, Māyā and others. The Godhead therefore is a two-in-one reality. Except for the *Śrīsūkta*[55] and later portions of the *Mahānārayanīya Upaniṣad*,[56] the *Vedic* literature does not conceive of the co-presence of a female principle along with *Brahman* or Īśvara Those *Upaniṣads*[57] which subscribe to the concept the female principle as constituting the Ultimate Reality, are held to be of later origin This concept is also indicated or elaborated in the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas*. In this respect, the *Āgamas* maintain their own concept and tradition, not shared by ancient *Vedic* tradition

Admission of a Supreme Deity is closely connected with problems like God's relations to the world in respect of its

55 This forms part of the *Khila* of the *Ṛgveda* The word, '*Khila*', shows that it did not form part of the *Ṛgveda* in the recension that is now available Evidently, Vyāsa did not include it It could have been in some other recension which has now disappeared, and so it has a loose existence But on this ground, it cannot be treated as a later production.

56 *Mahānārāyanīya Upaniṣad*, 10

57. They are *Sītopaniṣad*, *Annapūrṇopaniṣad*, *Devyupaniṣad*, *Saubhāgyalakṣmyupaniṣad* and *Sarasvatīrahasyopaniṣad*.

origin, maintenance and destruction. The *Veda* texts contain conundrums,[58] questions and answers on the source of the world and cosmology.[59] Various theories, which have sprung later in the periods when systems of thought developed, are traceable to these sources. The *Itihāsas*, particularly the *Mahābhārata*,[60] and the *Purāṇas*[61] have their own versions of cosmology. In some of these,[62] Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra are regarded as respectively in charge of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world.

The attitude of the *Āgamas* towards cosmology differs from the concepts that are gathered from the aforesaid sources. On principle, the *Āgamas* agree with the evolution theory of the Sāṅkhya system, but there is much divergence from the Sāṅkhya theory.

The concept of a two-in-one Deity does not permit the *Āgamas* to allow a place in their cosmology for other deities on a footing equal to that of the Deity exclusively glorified in any particular *Āgama*. Either one and the same Deity attends to all the cosmic functions or carries them out through the agency of other gods. This is treated also in some of the *Purāṇas*.[63]

58 *RV* I. 164; VIII 29.

59 *Ibid* X. 81. 4; *S Y* XVI. 45-92, XXIII 9; *T Br* III 9 5 4; *S Br.* XII. 2 6 12; *Chand. Up.* I 9. 6, 23

60 *M Bh* II 43, XII 18?-347

61. *VP* I. 5. 6. 7. 8; *Bh* II. 5, III 10. 23

62 The Supreme Being is called Hari. He is said to assume the forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra for carrying on the work of creation, maintenance and destruction. Vide *V P* I 2. 61 63 63 67 70. Therefore, the three deities, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra, are spoken of as having their respective functions.

63. Vide:—

सर्गस्थितिविनाशानां जगतो यो जगन्मयः ।
मूलभूतो नमस्तस्मै विष्णवे परमात्मने ॥ (*V P* I 2 4)

Cf Ibid. I, 2 7; Bhagavān assumes the names of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva for the purpose, *Ibid* I 2 66. Cf *Ibid* I 2 70.

Vide: एतौ द्वौ विबुधश्रेष्ठौ प्रसादक्रोधजौ स्मृतौ ।
तदादर्शितपन्थानौ सृष्टिसंहारकारकौ (*Mbh.* XII. 350. 19)

Cf. Bh. II. 4. 12.

Since God and *Śakti* are non-dual, there cannot be anything that could exist outside this Reality. If anything exists, it can only be an emanation of the Reality. To account for the existence of the world, the *Āgamas* give three cosmological accounts. Each one has a definite purpose to serve.

The first account mentions three[64] types of creation, namely, pure (*śuddha*) mixed (*miśra*) and impure (*aśuddha*). The pure type is represented by the emanations of *Śakti* which are intended to give relief to the selves in bondage. The mixed one corresponds to the traditional kind which is described in the *Purāṇas* and according to which Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra have their roles to play in the world to be created. The impure type is akin to the evolution of *Prakṛti*, more or less based on the teachings of the Sāṅkhya system. *Śakti* is present in every created product in some form or other.

The second account divides creation into six stages through which it passes. Each stage is called a sheath (*kośa*) [65] The first is *Śaktikośa* in which *Śakti* manifests itself, but remains in its transcendental form. *Māyākośa* is the second, which represents the beginning of the material creation. The *Prasūtikośa* is the third in which *Śakti* gives rise to deities with the help of the three *guṇas*. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra get their consorts during the fourth stage called *Prakṛtikośa*. *Brahmāṇḍakośa* is the name given to the fifth stage, which represents the evolution of the Sāṅkhya categories. The bodies of all animate beings represent the last stage called *Jīvakośa*.

64. The *Satkāryavāda* which forms the basis of the creation theory requires to be justified while explaining the emanations of various forms from the Ultimate Reality which is pure unsullied with the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*. This is possible only by admitting certain divisions in creation as pure, impure and mixed.

65 These are different from the five *kośas* of the *Vedāntins*: *anna*, *prāṇa*, *manas*, *vijñāna* and *ānanda*.

The third cosmological account details sonic creation[66] which passes through six stages called *varṇa*, *kalā*, *tattva*, *mantra*, *pada* and *bhuvana*. The first stage is represented by absolute sound (*Śabdabrahman*) which has four stages of polarization under the names of *Parā*, *Paśyantī*, *Vaikharī* and *Madhyamā*[67] *Kalā* has five aspects,[68] namely, *Nivṛtti*, *Pratiṣṭhā*, *Vidyā*, *Śānti* and *Śāntyatītā* '*Tattva*' refers to the classification of sounds and of the created beings. The *mantra* stage can be termed as lin-g istic occultism This begins from the letters which are called *mātṛkās*[69] (a word which means 'mother') forming the source of all words. The *pada* stage[70] marks four levels of consciousness,

66. This is concerned with the creation of sound from *Brahman* and its development through stages.

67. Vide :

तत्र स्वपरश्रोत्रविषया वैखरी। मध्यमा हृदयदेशस्था पदप्रत्यक्षानुपपन्ना व्यवहारातीता। योगिनां तु तत्रापि प्रकृतिप्रत्ययावगतिरस्ति। परायां तु न।

Laghumañjūṣavyākhyā-kalā p 182. (Chowkamba edn.)

Cf. *Vākyapadīya* I. 144 ; *Shakti and Shakta*, pp. 247-9.

68. Three more are added to make this number eight,

Vide : निवृत्तिश्च प्रतिष्ठा च विद्या शान्तिस्तथैव च ॥
शान्त्यतीताभिमाना च प्राणा गुणवती तथा।
गुणसूक्ष्मा निर्गुणा च एताः संज्ञाः क्रमात् स्मृताः ॥

(*LT*. XXXV. 15 *b*, 16)

69. This word is a collective term for the letters which form the basis of all sounds. Cf *Shakti and Shakta*, pp. 260, 290

70. A fifth stage called *Turyātīta* is admitted as denoting its supra-*vyūha* state of existence which manifests fully the soul's majesty and splendour. Vide *LT* (Translation) p 130, *fn* ; *LT* XXIV. 31 ; LI 11.

See also Śivāgrayogīndraśivācārya's *Śaivaparibhāṣā*, pp 63 64.

Some *Upaniṣads* describe the person in this state. Vide *Nārada-parivrājaka Upaniṣad* *Turīyātītāvadhūta Upaniṣad* and *Saṁnyāsa Upaniṣad*. It is however doubtful whether the contents of these have any direct bearing on the passage in *LT*. cited above.

Cf. *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī*, *Āgamādhikāra*, II. pp. 18-20.

namely, *jāgrat*, (waking stage), *svapna* (dream), *suṣupti* (deep sleep) and *turiya* (transcendental state) The last one, *bhuvana*, consists of the material creation. Among these, *varṇa* and *mantra* have a direct bearing on sound and its creation. The other four are related to general cosmology. This account of creation seeks to indicate that the physical world, which is made up of the material nature and sonic nature, arises out of the Absolute Reality, identified with Absolute Sound. Another name for this theory of creation is '*adhvan*' and the six courses are called *ṣaḍ adhvānaḥ*.

While the above account of the third theory of creation is concerned with an admixture of sonic and material creation and therefore is objective, there is another kind of evolution represented purely by sound.[71] The first or primordial stage is represented by the Ultimate Reality (*paraṁ tattvam*) and is in the form of sentience. When this Reality entertains a will to create, it manifests itself as *Sakti* It is also called *Māyȧ* and the root-cause (*kāraṇabindu*). This shows that *Śakti* is non-different from the Supreme Reality. The next stage in the evolution is the formation of *Nāda* which is indistinct sound possessing light. From the *Nada* emanates the supreme *Bindu* (*Para*), which represents the primary stage of creation. Out of this evolve the lower *Bindu* and *Bija*. From the lower *Bindu* a lower kind of *Nāda* is produced, representing the creation of the sound of the letters; and the *Bija* is the source for the *tattvas* of the material wolrd.

These two accounts of the third kind of creation have a significant meaning. Other systems of thought hold sound to

71. Vide

सच्चिदानन्दविभवात् सकलात् परमेश्वरात् ।
आसीच्छक्तिस्ततो नादो नादाद्बिन्दुसमुद्भवः ॥
परशक्तिमयः साक्षात् त्रिधासौ भिद्यते पुनः ।
बिन्दुर्नादो बीजमिति तस्य भेदाः समीरिताः ॥

Śaradatilaka, I. 7, 8.

have sprung from *ākāśa*, *ahaṅkāra*, *vāyu* and other sources. This does not explain the important role which *mantras* play in worship nor show how God could be taken as existing in *mantras*. A better exposition is therefore attempted by the *Āgamas*, which seek to trace the origin and development of *mantras* from the Ultimate Reality.

The individual self (*jīva*) is represented by the sixth *kośa* called *jīva-kośa*. It is therefore part of Absolute Reality. *Śakti* manifests itself in several kinds of evolutes which are insentient and sentient, the latter being represented by the selves. The selves are admitted to be *karma*-ridden, and the evolution of *Śakti* is only to help them in freeing themselves from bondage.

Liberation consists in the self obtaining proper enlightenment about the essence of the Supreme Reality. In other words, the self has to realize that it is part of *Śakti* which is not different from God. The schools of *Āgamas* have different interpretations of the nature of liberation which is based on this concept of the self being a part of and emanation from *Śakti*. The self merges into *Śakti* and so has no existence apart from God.[72] Others hold that, being sentient, the self even then has individuality, with transcendental existence.[73]

The self gets to this stage through enlightenment acquired by divine grace which is called *Śaktipāta*[74] a word indicative of the role played here by *Śakti*. *Karma*, *jñana* and *yoga* are the means to win the grace of the Divine.

The *yoga* section of the *Āgamas* discusses the methods which a self has to adopt to know the real nature of the Ultimate Reality. They are based on the *Yogā-sūtras* of Patañjali. The

72. This is quite appropriate, inasmuch as the self issues out of the sentient form of *Śakti*.

73. Same as under 70.

74. Alighting of grace is called *Śaktipāta*, a name given in the *Pāñcarātra*, Śaivism and Śaktaism. See *The World as Power*, p. 212.

Agamas recognize that, within the human body, there are six *cakras* (or circles)[75] with the names of *Mulādhāra*, *Svādhısthāna*, *Maṇipūra*, *Anāhata*, *Viśuddha*, and *Ājñā*, placed one above the other, the first one being placed below the navel, and the last at the top of the head All of them are said to be in the form of lotuses There are several ducts (*nādīs*) inside the body among which an arterial duct is called *Suśumnā* and is held to be the most important. *Idā* is another important duct to its right, while *Pıngalā* runs to its left. The *Suṣumnā* duct connects the *Mulādhāra* with the *Ājñā*. The *jīvaśakti* lies coiled like a serpent in the *Mulādhāra*.

The self has to adopt *yogic* practices to arouse this sleeping *Śakti* which is called *Kuṇdalıni* and make it rise up through the duct of *Susumnā*, pass through the 'circles', and ultimately reach the *Brahmarandhra*, the middle cavity at the top of *Suṣumnā*. At this stage, the self would merge with the Supreme *Śakti* and have a direct experience of bliss. In order to adopt this method, the self has to practise various postures (*āsanas*) and carry out breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*). The *Idā* and *Piṅgalā* ducts play a prominent role in *prāṇāyāma*. The method of *yoga* as recommended in the *Agamas* envisages a self which acquires the knowledge of reality to find the Absolute in himself, since God is not absent from anywhere and is not distinct from *Śakti*. The aspirant is therefore required to have experience within himself and, as such, this concept has appeal only to a limited number who could adopt *yogic* practices

The next section is called *Kriyāpāda*, which is concerned with the making of images, construction of temples and installation of the images there. The gods are represented in the *Vedas* as displaying or possessing distinct features so as to be definitely

75 *Ibid*, p 113 They may be plexuses or centres of the involuntary nervous sydem They are described as focal points of power in the body of man which are only partially open. (*Studies in the 'Tantras' and the 'Veda'*, p. 79.)

identified and distinguished. Certain features displayed by some gods were held in common by more than one deity. This led to the formation of the concept of 'all-deities' (*viśvedevāḥ*)[76] and to the evolution of a monotheistic tendency making the gods as subordinate in position to a Supreme God whose various manifestations they were taken to represent.

It is hard for an aspirant to have concentration on the features of a god who is not present before him whenever he requires. The need therefore arose to evolve a concept which would admit of the form of the particular god who is to be meditated upon. God has been conceived of by the *Vedic* seers as all-pervading (*sarvavyāpin*) and also transcendental [77] Another principle which is involved in the concept of Godhead is that He is also immanent[78]. These aspects have made it possible for evolving a new concept according to which God, who is infinite and beyond all kinds of temporal, spiritual and objective limitations, and who, for that reason, could not be described and depicted accurately with the instruments of measurement and evaluation that are finite, becomes accessible to man by taking a physical body in the shape of an idol. Along with the idol, there also came into existence the mystic diagrams drawn to specific scales on metals or other materials with the letters of the *mantra* relating to the particular deity being set in specified spots.

This concept of admitting a finitized form for the Infinite Supreme Being is based on two assumptions. God can make

76. *RV.* III. 29

77. Vide :

अन्तर्बहिश्च तत्सर्वं व्याप्य नारायणः स्थितः ।

Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad. XIII. 2.

अत्यतिष्ठद्दशाङ्गुलम् ।

(*RV.* X. 90. 1)

78. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.* VI. 11.

Himself manifest at any time at His own will. The manifested form is as much God's as the unmanifested one is. God presents Himself in this form for the sake of His devotee, and so God's presence in the idol cannot be questioned. Secondly, God's immanence, when it is displayed in the idol, cannot also be explained away. Therefore, the finitized form of God as idol must be taken to have been known to Indians from very ancient times on the authority of the *Āgamas*.

The various deities were worshipped by the Vedic seers by making offerings of ghee, butter and other materials in the sacred fire, whenever specific desires were needed to be fulfilled. The worshipper was well aware that his particular desire would be granted if a particular deity was worshipped The relationship between the worshipper and the deity was based merely on this understanding. People who used to know this and realized it, must have felt in course of time that there existed between them and the particular deity an intimate relation which was drawing them both close to each other. This gave rise to the feeling of dependence on the god, which developed into one of affection. Affection gradually resulted in the rise of devotion in man for the god. Man could not then live aloof from that deity. He desired to offer his oblations to that deity in the fire. It is not unnatural then that he should have desired to see his god before him. A devotee should, indeed, expect to perceive his god in a form which his finite senses could easily comprehend The form with which the god presented himself to his devotee, must have been cherished as his essential form. Those who had visions like these of the same god would not have allowed that attractive figure to go away from their sight. They were not sure of having it again, if it vanished from their presence Naturally, they should have taken steps to shape, out of any material they had, whether mud, stone or metal, a figure that would represent that form in the idol carved out by them So it is the devotion of the worshipper that has brought about the concept of the idol and idol worship.

The seer who used to feel that his transactions with a deity whom he worshipped by making offerings into the sacred fire were ended after that act of worship was completed, did not any longer ponder over the identity of that deity, as there was no need thereafter for continuing the worship When that deity was represented in an idol, the deity was always there before the worshipper, attracting his mind and senses Emotions surged into his mind, taking the forms of gratitude for the favours received and attraction to the beauty of the person of the deity. The mind was enraptured with the ravishing beauty of the god. The worshipper could no longer allow himself to forget that form or ignore the presence of the deity there.

The idol is God Himself. Awareness that God is supreme, possessing countless qualities, powerful, amiable and easy of access to the worshipper, gives rise to affection and passionate longing for God. Naturally, the worshipper would erect a place for keeping the idol, decorate that place and see that nothing affects its sanctity This is the starting point for the rise of the section called *Kriyāpāda* in the *Āgamas*.

Steeped in the *Vedic* traditions, the seers could not ignore the significance of the *Vedic mantras* which, on being repeated by them, brought forth the deity before them The *mantras* were therefore used for all purposes connected with the worship of the idol.

The feeling of attachment for an object fills the human heart and arouses there a desire to keep that object well-secured in a safe place. When that feeling is enlivened by the spirit of devotion, attempts are made by the owner of that object to beautify it and enshrine it in a place that is also embellished with all artistic designs in consonance with the beauty of the object. Every possible attempt is made to adopt all devices for the main purpose of providing that object with a charming environment. It is in this sense that Hindu iconography, sculpture, painting and architecture are said to have had a divine origin. These fine arts were primarily intended for God.

The selection of the proper site for the erection of the temple, excavating it, preparation of the bricks, raising of the basement and other preliminaries are dealt with in detail in the *Kriyāpāda* Choice of stones, erection of pillars, building the halls and construction of the temples are then described. The temple is treated as *Puruṣa*, the humanized Supreme Being The cosmos is conceived to be present abstractly and also in conception 79 So, the temple is constructed with specific numbers of halls, courtyards and other structures, with all the deities represented there in the form of images and specified places. This explains why the *sanctum sanctorum* is called '*garbhagrha*'. The size of the towers, the storeys in the towers and the temple structure should be uniform, but in proportion to the size of the chief idol to be enshrined in the temples. Rules are given for the selection of stone, wood or metal for making the idols. After the idols are carved, an initial ceremony called *adhivāsa* is to be performed. Then the eyes are carved for the idol followed by an elaborate process of installation. After this, the idols become sanctified and fit for worship. Methods of offering daily worship to the deity are then treated. *Vedic mantras* are to be recited while attending to all this work.

Similarly, every person is required to offer worship to God in his residence. The procedural details for this purpose are also contained in this section of the *Āgamas* The idol, the *sālagrāma*, the *liṅga* and the mystic diagram are required to be worshipped in the house in accordance with the aptitude, capacity and economic conditions of the worshipper.

The fourth section which is called *Caryāpāda* prescribes the rules for carrying out the daily routine of the aspirant and for attending to the worship of God in temples and houses and conducting general, private and public festivals Most of the texts of the *Agamas* contain a more detailed exposition of this

79 For a treatment of this, see M. A. Dhaky : '*Prāsāda* as cosmos' in *Brahmavidyā*, XXX, pts. 3 & 4.

section than others, indicating the ulterior purpose of the *Āgamas*. This section lays stress on the practical side of their teachings.

The worship of God is to be conducted through *mantras*, which are constituted of letters or rather, syllabic sounds. These represent the power of God.[80] Each letter has a deity. An aspirant has to choose the letters which get moulded into the form of a *mantra* and use it for worshipping his deity Any set of letters or any word is not a *mantra* The letters have to be such as to form a word which could become a *mantra*. Each letter in that *mantra* reveals only an aspect of God who is to be represented by it Only when the whole *mantra* gets formed, the full form of God would become available there. This is like a particular formation of letters which, becoming a word, would convey meaning. *Mantra* manifests God and thus stands for God whose presence is felt there. *Mantras* and Deity become one and the same. The letters of the *mantra* become the *yantra* of God So *mantra* is *yantra* or an idol of God The *yantra* or idol cannot therefore be a mere piece of stone or metal To produce this manifestation of the deity in the *yantra* or idol, the *mantra* must be intonated in the most accurate way prescribed in the *Agamas* in respect of both sound and rhythm. Any attempt to render it in another language would reduce it to the status of a mere word, possessing simply physical properties. Such translated words may have the status of prayers, but *mantras* alone have the power to compel the deity to appear before the aspirant.

The letters, which form *mantras*, are called *mātṛkās*, as they form the basis of words. They are classified under different heads. A pedestal for them (*mātṛkāpīṭha*) is required to be prepared with specific dimensions and a diagram is to be drawn to take the shape of a lotus. There are specific rules to draw the forms of the letters in the petals in accordance with the *mantra* of the deity to be worshipped.

80. Vide: *LT*. XX : *AhS*. XVIII, 53.

The characteristic feature of the *mantra* is consciousness and is said to be of four parts,[81] namely, *bija*, *piṇḍa*, *saṁjñā* and *pada* The *bīja* may contain either one or two vowels coupled with a consonant. It constitutes the essential part of the particular deity's *mantra*. The *praṇava*, *hrīṃ*, *śrīṃ*, *aiṃ*, *klīṃ*, and such others illustrate the *bija*. The consonants, inserted between the *bija* and the remaining part, constitute the *piṇḍa*. Vowels also are sometimes connected with it : *iṃ* represents this *Saṃjñā* is the name of the particular deity addressed in the *mantra* in association with the words, *namas* and *praṇava*, e.g., '*namo Viṣṇave*'. A combination of verbal utterance with nominal concepts of a laudatory nature gives rise to the *pada* section, e.g , '*sahasrajvālāya*'. All these four parts together constitute a complete *mantra* and each of these is held to be as efficacious as a *mantra* Such words as *svāhā*, *vauṣaṭ* and *phaṭ* are used at the end of certain *mantras*, conveying the offering.[82]

Mantras of two kinds are employed in the *Āgamic* practices, namely, *vaidika* and *tāntrika*. The *vaidika mantras* are taken

81 All the four are essential It one of them is not available. then the *mantra* becomes of the middle kind. If none of them is there, then the *mantra* is called inferior. Vide *LT*. XXII. 38, 39.

See also *LT*. translation p. 115.

Cf. *Pauṣ* XXXVIII 262 and *Śprs*. *LI* 1-9.

82. Vide :

कर्मानुरूपमन्ते नमस्कारादिकं न्यसेत् ।
तथा फलाभिसन्धाने नमस्कारः प्रकीर्तितः ॥
संप्राप्तौ स्वणिमादीनां स्वाहाकारमुदीरयेत् ।
आप्यायने तु वै वौषट् सर्वत्र कमलोद्भव ॥
वशार्थे चापि विद्वेषे दुष्टोच्चाटनकर्मणि ।
हुंफट्कारं च निहितमन्योन्यप्रीतये वषट् ॥
तृप्त्यर्थं बलिदाने च तेजसोऽप्यभिवृद्धये ।
ऋते सप्रणवाद्विप्र नमस्कारपदात्तु वै ॥

Cf. SKS. *Brahma*, XI 9-14 ; JS. XV, 185-188 a.

from the four *Vedas*, according as circumstances demand. There are also *tāntrika mantras*, and some which represent an admixture of both. The *tāntrika mantras* are required on two grounds One is that every deity, which forms part of the retinue of the principal deity, requires a specific *mantra* for worship, and a *Vedic mantra* is not always available for the purpose. Secondly, they provide those who are not qualified to study the *Vedas* with *mantras* which they could readily use; e.g. *Oṃ hrīṃ halāya astrāya hūṃ phaṭ*; *Oṃ hrīṃ aiṃ kīrtyai namaḥ*; *sadoditānandavigrahāya hrīṃ klīṃ svāhā* The *Vedic mantras* are adapted for *tāntrik* purposes. For instance, there are *Gāyatrī mantras*[83] for several deities on the model of the *Sāvitrī mantra*. The *Ṛgvedic mantra* '*Svasti na Indro Vṛddhaśravāḥ*' (1 89 6), is adapted as '*hrīm hūm svasti naḥ Kātyāyani Āparṇā*'. These *mantras* have to be repeated (as *japa*) in order to attain success (*siddhi*).

Those who adopt the *tāntrika* mode of worship are required to undergo initiation[84] (*dīkṣā*) under a preceptor who is well up in the subject. The qualifications are prescribed for the pupil and the preceptor. Initiation (*dīkṣā*) is not simply giving lectures or guiding the apprentice in doing a piece of work, but transference of the supreme power which resides in his body into the body of the pupil.

There are several items to be gone through while offering worship of God. Worship of God is of two kind[85] namely, internal (*antaryāga*) and external (*bāhya yāga*). The aspirant is required to look inward and find God there The entire procedure of worship as practised internally is to be gone through and, after the inner worship is over, external worship is to be undertaken.

83. Vide: *Nārāyana Upaniṣad*, 5, 6, 7, 20.

84 *Principles of Tantra*, Part I, pp 431-7.

85. *Shakti and Shakta*, p. 311.

The first step to be adopted before actually beginning the inner or subjective mode of worship is the purification of the elements in the body of the aspirant (*bhūtaśuddhi*)[86] This consists in imagining the earthy element of the body being absorbed into the subtle element characterised by smell (*gandha-tanmātrā*); which is to be merged in water, which in its turn in the subtle element characterised by taste (*rasa-tanmātrā*) and so on till the body gets into the mind, that into life and that into matter Matter is to be absorbed in the Supreme Being. In the reverse order, a new body is gradually imagined to be created, a body which is made up of pure *sattva*, so as to be free from the impurities which arise on account of the *rajas* and *tamas* of matter. This new body then gets fit for worshipping God.

The human body, which is made up of matter, is regarded as impure. The ancient texts tend to depict the body as reprehensible.[87] The question that would generally be raised in the context is as to how the perfect idol or diagram of God, sanctified by the utterance of *mantras*, can be touched by the impure hand of man and offered worship There is no answer to this question in any ancient work except what is suggested in the *Āgamas*. By this process of *bhūta-śuddhi*, an aspirant is made to imagine that he gets rid of his impure body and obtains a pure frame with which he could offer worship to God This at once suggests that the body which has become perfect and flawless through this mental process is fully qualified and competent to offer worship. Hence the *Āgamas* have gone beyond the *Vedas* in suggesting that the human body is not so detestable as it is held to be. One should rather attach value and respect to the body which acquires the unique privilege in

86 *Vācaspatya*, pp 4686-7; *Shakti and Shakta*, pp 287-289; *The World as Power* pp 152-3 *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati*, Part III 97 99. *Mantras* are contained in the *Subāla Upaniṣad*, II.

87. Vide, *VP* I 1 7-62a, VI. 7. 17-18.
Bh. VII. 2. 42; VII. 15. 41-46; XI. 8. 33; XI. 26. 19.

this life for handling the idol or diagram and offering worship to it directly.

After carrying out *bhūtaśuddhi*, the aspirant should imagine that he offers worship to God within himself, passing through all the stages of worship and using the materials which are also imagined to have been procured there for the purpose This mental worship enables the aspirant to feel happy that God within him has been worshipped by him and helps him in preparing himself for the external mode of worship.

Apart from collecting the widely used materials of worship such as the vessels, bell and others, the *Āgamas* insist on certain preliminaries to be gone through before the actual act of worship is begun.

Among them, the *maṇḍala*[88] is a pictorial representation of the descent of the Supreme Reality on earth at the spot where God is to be worshipped. This takes the form of drawing certain figures on the ground. The figures generally take the form of a lotus with a specific number of petals. Each figure has particular spots assigned for various deities with the chief deity taking its place in the centre. In general, a *maṇḍala* can be used for any deity. With an artistic background, the *maṇḍala* is treated as the place to be worshipped. This is generally used on occasions when *pavitrāropaṇa*, initiation and other rites are undertaken.

Yantra[89] plays a prominent part in the *Āgamas* The word, '*yantra*' which is derived from the root '*yam*' meaning 'to restrain', conveys the sense that the *yantra* is capable of subduing lust, anger and other impurities which affect the self. It

88. The *maṇḍala* is not a mere piece of decorative imagery for a ritual It furnishes a powerful material basis for the operation of subtle forces within and without. Vid *Studies in the Tantras and the Veda*, pp. 69-73.

89. *Shakti and Shakta*, pp. 88 -8.

restrains the self from falling a victim to vice and fixes its attention on the deity. Generally, it takes the shape of a diagram drawn on paper, engraved on metals or cut on crystals and stones. *Yantras* vary in design according to the deities they represent and whose *mantras* have their syllables written or carved there in specific places. The *yantra* is said to be the body of the deity which is *mantra* itself.

Vide:

यन्त्रं मन्त्रमयं प्रोक्तं मन्त्रात्मा देवतैव हि ।
देहात्मनोर्यथा भेदो यन्त्रदेवतयोस्तथा ॥

(Cited in *Śabdakalpadruma*, Pt. IV. p. 13.)

While *maṇḍalas* could be used for any deity, the *yantra* is concerned only with a particular deity. All *yantras* have a common edging called *bhūpura*, which is a quadrangular figure with four doors on each side. These doors are intended to isolate the *yantra* from the outside world. The worshipper meditates upon God and arouses Him within himself. He then transfers Him to the *yantra* which becomes His body. The *yantra* is then no longer gross matter. It becomes fit to be worshipped. This transference of God into the *yantra* is stated to be *Prāṇapratiṣṭhā*,[90] as the deity is infused with life there.

The *yantra* becomes thus the concrete presence of the deity. The syllables of the *mantra* of the deity are still there, representing the deity. Meditation, repetition of the *mantra* and the act of worship are all done with reference to the *yantra*. Though concretized, the deity is not visualized in the *yantra* by all the aspirants. Hence this principle of the *yantra* is extended in its application to the idol of God which represents Him in physical form, acceptable and attractive to the eyes and minds of the aspirants. The idol, made of stone, wood, minerals, or metals, does not have the syllables of the *mantra* carved on it.

90. Vide; *The Tantras: Studies in their Religion and Literature*, p. 80.

Sometimes, however, the idol may be installed on a *yantra* specifically prepared for the purpose.

Nyāsa[91] is a practice enjoined by the *Āgamas*. Sounds have particular deities. They are also located in the human body. The sound, presided over by a particular deity, must be identified with the one present in the body. This is done by touching that part of the body where it is located with the tip of a particular finger in the right hand and its palm. This is called *Nyāsa*. While doing this, the *mantra* of the particular deity must be uttered. Thereby, the body of the aspirant is considered to get filled up with the life of the deity. This *Nyāsa* is called *mantranyāsa*, which makes the aspirant acquire fitness to worship that deity. It is a mental process which removes the obstacles which lie in the path of offering worship to the deity. When it is done on one hand with another, it is called *Hastanyāsa* or *Karanyāsa*.

This is to be followed by doing it on the body, when it is called *Aṅganyāsa*. The latter is said to be of five kinds[92] the limbs on which *nyāsa* is to be done being *hṛdaya*, *śikhā*, *śiras*, *astra* and *kavaca*. When this is to be done on the *yantra* and idol, they are held to possess these limbs. The aspirant who spiritualizes his body by *Nyāsa*, infuses the potency of the *mantra* into the idol on which he performs *Nyāsa*. He must spiritualize the limbs of the idol and the interior of the idol also: the *Nyāsa* is thus both external (*bahir*) and internal (*antas*). *Nyāsa* is also done with a view to create a new potency in the idol. It is of three kinds, *saṅhāranyāsa*, *sṛṣṭinyāsa* and *sthitinyāsa*.[93] *Nyāsa* is required to be done on almost all

91. *Ibid* p 80; *Shakti and Shakta*, pp 289-293.

92 *Vacaspatya*, p 4173.

93 Several aspects of infusing potency with reference to the *mantras* and the parts of the body where it is to be done, as also having it in the reverse way, are dealt with in great detail. Vide *SKS. Brahma* IX. 12-69. Cf. *Iśanaśivagurudevapaddhati*, Part II. pp. 58-60.

occasions and whenever a fresh act of worship is to be undertaken.[94]

In every part of the act of worship, *mudrā*[95] is required to be displayed by the aspirant. *Mudrā* is a symbolic handpose with the fingers assuming particular positions. This plays a very important role along with *nyāsa* in acts of worship. Being a symbol, it is intended to convey a feeling about or refer to a situation or a condition in which the person adopting it is placed.

Writing which includes painting, gestures which convey the intention of those who display them and articulate speech have been, from a very ancient period of human history, the means which men have adopted for communicating with one another. Among these, speech in the form of articulate expression is most widely used, while writing comes next in importance. Gestures, unaccompanied by words, do convey sense. Yet, speech is seldom unaccompanied by gestures in the form of movements of head and hands with fingers and changes in facial expression which include those of eyes and lips. Quite often, these physical movements give strength to speech.

It is therefore natural that both in practical life and in artistic presentations such as dance, the poses with the physical limbs should play a dominant role. The same principle is applicable to the employment of *mudrās* in worship. *Varada*, *abhaya-hasta*, *vyākhyāmudrā* and other kinds of *mudrās* are found to be shown by icons and painted and sculptured figures, adding much to their communicative effectiveness. Similarly, the aspirant is enjoined to employ the *mudrās*, while performing worship.

94. Invariably, this is to be done on the body of the pupil by the preceptor during *dīkṣā*. When it is done from head to foot, it is *sṛṣṭinyāsa*; from navel to heart, it is *sthitinyāsa*, and from foot to head, it is *saṃhāranyāsa*.

Cf *Saṃskāraratnamālā*, p. 737 where the *Vāyavīyasaṃhitā* is cited.

95. *Shakti and Shakta*, pp. 286-7.

The word, '*mudrā*',[96] is derived from the root, '*mud*', meaning 'to rejoice', and the root '*rā*' meaning 'to give'. The word then is taken to mean 'giving delight' evidently to the deity before whom this is displayed. To emphasize that the display of *mudrā* is obligatory, attempts have been made to explain the connotation of this word. Two purposes[97] are indicated through this connotation. One is that what is undesirable could be dispelled by this display. Sins get removed, defects disappear and malicious spirits are cleared away, smoothening the path of worship for the aspirants. The second purpose is that the desires of the aspirants get fulfilled through this display.[98]

Mudrās are numerous, as several feelings and situations have to be represented. Some texts of the *Āgamas* have a section[99] which describes how the several *mudrās* are to be formed and displayed. They have to be displayed in accordance with the *mantras* that are recited.

96 Vide

मुदो हर्षस्य वितरणात् परमानन्दस्वरूपत्वात्
विश्वस्यान्तस्तुरीयसत्तायां मुद्रणात् मुद्र[illegible]मा ।

Prapañcahṛdaya, p. 88, *Sārs* LIII 83, *Śabdakalpadruma* III p 745

Cf Maheśvarānanda's commentary on *Mahārthamañjarī*, p 131

97. *Is* XXIV 2, *Pars.* XIV. 1; *Pās.* IV. 22 *Īśānaśivagurudeva-paddhati*, I pp. 72-74.

98 Vide

तस्मान्मुद्रेति साख्याता सर्वकामार्थसाधनी ।

Śabdakalpadruma, III p. 745, *Suprabhedāgama*, IX

The *mudrā* is also explained as offering rejoicing to the self through the body. It is also said to afford relief for the self from adverse planetary influences and to destroy sins. The former is indicated by the [illegible] and the latter by *drā*. Vide.—*Tantrasāra* cited on p 7 9 of the *Saṃskāra-ratnamālā*

99 *ŚKS* *Kri* II; *IS* XXIV. *JS* VIII, *Pars* XIV; *Pās* IV 22. *Śāradātilaka*, XXIII.

Cf *Smṛticandrikā*, I. pp. 146-148.

Worshipping the deity involves sixteen kinds of ceremonial practices (*upacāra*) [100] which are *Āvāhana*, *Sthapana*, *Sannidhāna*, *Sinnirodhana*, *Avagunthana*, *Dhenumudrā* *Arghya*, *Pādya*, *Ācamaniya* *Puspadāna*, *Dhūpa*, *Dīpa*, *Naivedya*, *Pānīya* *Japasamarpana* and *Ārātrika*. Sometimes, the first ten alone are taken up for enumeration. All these are classified according to the five elements out of which they could have sprung.

On occasions, the idol or *yantra* is to be given a ceremonial bath, the preparations for which are to be made on an elaborate scale There are varieties of the bath [101] Minute details are given for selecting the right type of flowers [102] and of plucking them The prepared food to be offered to the deity is called *havis* [103] The nature of the grains and other ingredients of the preparation is dealt with according to the quantity required for the offering

The *Agama* texts generally have the words, '*tantra*', '*samhitā*, and others at the end of their names *Mrgendrasamhitā*, *Mahālaksmījayatantra* *Laksmītantra*, etc. This shows that the *Agama* texts came into being after the *Vedic* traditions became stabilized, and also that they are all based on the *Vedic* texts. However, these details do not belong exclusively to any one creed or religion Apart from Hinduism, the Buddhist religion too had *tāntrika* aspects

A difficulty arises, in the absence of acceptable evidence, in settling the identity of some of these concepts. Ever since foreign scholars began handling Indological subjects, particularly Hindu traditions, their tendency has been to deny outright

100 *Shakti and Shakta*, p 233.

101 *VK* p 416, *SA* LII Nārāyaṇa: *Tantrasamuccaya*, Part II pp 375 442 *Suprabhedāgama*, XV.

102 *Śāradātilaka*, p 157.

103 *SKS*. *Śiva*, V Cf. Aghoraśiva: *Devīpratiṣṭhāvidhi*, p. 200. Appayyadīkṣita: *Śivārcanacandrika*, pp. 81-89, *Suprabhedāgama*, X, XVII.

Indigenous origin to any concept that has been outstanding in its excellence or attractiveness. Either the Greek tradition or Buddhistic developments have been cited as having served as the foundations for or as having inspired the Hindu concepts to grow and develop. This could be conceded, had there been available any evidence of a decisive nature in favour of such views. However, such evidence is yet to be found out. On the other hand, whatever is available to the contrary is summarily dismissed as of no consequence. Therefore, the question of Greek influence is yet to be settled on surer grounds.

As regards the Buddhist influence, what developed centuries after the Buddha's demise has been attributed to his preachings which are yet not available in the form of specific books. If the Buddha had not preached against the *Vedic* tradition, then no concept could be attributed to him as exclusively Buddhistic. If he had preached against Brahminism (a term coined by the Western Orientalists with a view to create mutual distrust and lack of respect among the Indian communities and thereby to decry the indigenous character of Hindu religion), then the *tāntric* practices which sprang among the Buddhists of later days, could only be exotic to Buddhism. They must have been taken by the Buddhists from others.

It is also suggested that the original inhabitants of India, who had no progressive and civilized notions of life, should have been following these practices. The founders of *Tantricism* saw in them much that was needed to inspire the creation of a new cult. The *Vedic* source for the rise of the *Āgamas* is thus sought to be denied.

This theory requires critical consideration. It pre-supposes that enlightened men came from outside to India where there were already the natives who were inferior to them in all respects. This pre-supposition is based on ignorance and prejudice. No society has ever consisted of members having the same standards of culture, education and other equipment.

This must apply also to the people who lived in ancient India. This society did not certainly migrate into India from without Practices of the people should have varied, and the different practices could have reacted on one another Certain of them might have been taken up by a section which did not have them before. These practices have been there ever since the enlightened section of people had their own way of religious and secular life fully organized. The foreign or tribal origin of the *Agamas* does not therefore merit acceptance The sources for the *Āgamas* must therefore be admitted to have been varied but Indian, permitting the votaries of the various cults to draw out whatever they required. Besides mutual influence, exotic impact cannot be totally denied.

The Himalayan regions [104] where Kailāsa is situated, are said to have been the home of the *Śaiva Agamas* Some think [105] that it is from Bengal the *Āgamas* spread to Assam, Nepal, Tibet and China. Assam [106] is the natal home according to some others It would be prudent to avoid taking sides on his problem, until evidence becomes available. That the *tāntric* practices have been largely prevalent in certain areas cannot help in determining their original home The extent of foreign influence cannot also be decided, even if it were to be proved that there was such influence on the development of the *Agamas*, for the Indian tradition adopts what is borrowed from others so as to be in harmony with its character. The result has been the loss of individuality of the borrowed features, when there are any.

The date of the *Āgamas* poses another problem The evidence will have to be found in works, both *Vedic* and *Āgamic*. The system of the *Āgamas* must have taken its rise in the remote past and undergone development gradually and not at any

104 *The Tantras · Studies in their Religion and Philosophy*, p 6.

105 Winternitz· *Indian Literature*, I. p 592, fn. 4.

106. *Ibid.*

uniform pace Long after its full development, the system would be recorded in works. The concept of worshipping the deity in a concrete form could have been evolved even when the *mantra* portions were accommodated to form sections of *Vedic* ritual in the *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda* and their *Brāhmaṇas* It is absurd to believe that those who had a yearning to visualize God waited and waited for centuries to witness the end of the era of the Vedic rituals and the production of Vedic literature. The *Āgamic* concepts must have been developing alongside the ritualistic literature, but certainly a long time after the *mantras* became powerful means in the hands of the sages to invoke the presence of the gods.

Sages like Atri, Kāśyapa, Marīci, Mārkaṇḍeya, Śaunaka, Sanatkumāra and others were all intimately connected with the development of the Vedic ritual and the philosophical disciplines Their names are also associated with the concepts of the *Agamic* tradition and with some works on the *Agamas* An ancient date even for the evolution of these concepts is not acceptable to the Orientalists who have pronounced predilections for placing these at a very late date, leaving the earlier periods to be marked by mental stagnation and lack of inspiration But the *Kalpasūtras* 107 refer to a few important sages associated with some of the *Āgamic* concepts.

It is said that the *Āgamas* must have risen after the Vedic period, but this does not make clear even the probable date. In this context, it is necessary to understand what the expression, '*Vedic period*', means. The Orientalists divide Sanskrit literature into Vedic, epic and classical periods. The epic period is said to have begun after the close of the period of the

107 Bhavatrāta's commentary on Jaimini's *Śrautasūtra* mentions Śāṇḍilya, (p 224), Baudhāyana's *Śrautasūtra* mentions Atri, 18 28 and Bhṛgu 2 16, *Āpastambaśrautasūtra* refers to Bhṛgu, 25 5 .0 6 9, Ātreya..., 24. 8-10, Kapiñjala, 20 14 5, Kaśyapa 13 1 5, and Bharadvāja, 24. 6. 18 and 7. 3-10.

Vedas which include the *Saṁhitās*, *Brāhmanas*, *Āranyakas* and *Upanisads* and also the *Vedaṅgas*. The classical period commenced after the epics were composed Those who are guided by this opinion of the Orientalists, forget that Vedic texts contain narratives, episodes and other epic-like formations [108] Likewise, the language and contents of the epics have much of the classical features. So, it is to be realized that these periods overlap one another

The *Vedas* continue to be recited down to the present day. The rituals are still performed, though not on such a large scale as in the distant past. The Vedic passages have been analysed, interpreted and expounded by eminent authorities like Yāska, Skandasvāmin, Sāyaṇa, Bhattabhāskara and others, all of whom did not live in the so called Vedic period The spirit of the *Vedas* is still glowing, and this itself is a mark of the Vedic atmosphere which prevails even today. Kalidāsa is supposed by modern scholars to have lived at some time between the 1st century B C and 5th century A D., and to him goes the credit for the composition of the following *śloka* [109] in a Vedic metre He did not certainly live in the Vedic period.

अमी वेदिं परितः क्लृप्तधिष्ण्याः
समिद्वन्तः प्रान्तसंस्तीर्णदर्भाः ।
अपघ्नन्तो दुरितं हव्यगन्धै
र्वैतानास्त्वां वह्नयः पावयन्तु ॥

Abhijñānaśākuntala, IV. 7

108 For mention of *ākhyāna*, see *ŚBr.* I 3. 4. 3 2 , *Āśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra*, X 6 , for '*purāna*', see *ŚBr.* I. 5. 6. 8 ; *Chand, Up.* III 4 1, 2 , VII. 1 2, 4 , II 1

109 This *śloka* is composed in an admixture of two kinds of *Triṣṭubh*] namely *Vātormi* and *Śālinī*.

The *arcā* form is stated to have been introduced by the sages for worship at the beginning of the *Tretāyuga*[110]

Vide :—

शेते जीवेन रूपेण पुरेषु पुरुषो ह्यसौ ॥
तेष्वेव भगवान् राजंस्तारतम्येन वर्तते
तस्मात् पात्रं हि पुरुषो यावानात्मा यथेयते ॥
दृष्ट्वा तेषां मिथो नृणामवज्ञानात्मतां नृप ।
त्रेतादिषु हरेरर्चा क्रियायै कविभिः कृता ॥
ततोऽर्चायां हरिं केचित् संश्रद्धाय सपर्यया ।
उपासत उपास्तापि नार्थदा पुरुषद्विषाम् ॥

(*Bh* VII 14. 38b-40.)

The *Rāmāyaṇa* refers to the temple of Viṣṇu by the word, '*āyatana*'[111] and the abodes of gods through the words '*devāgāra*'[112] and '*sthāna*'[113]. These could be taken to refer to particular places where shrines were built for the worship of deities. It is not the holy fire-pit (*homakuṇḍa*) of the ritualists where the offerings were made for the deities. However, there is no mention of the idol or any symbol in these cases. Anyway, a specific structure (*agāra*) was eracted to worship the deity (*deva*). The word, '*sthāna*', in another passage,[114] should also point to the same structures.

The *Viṣṇupurāṇa*[115] contains unmistakable evidence to the *vyūha* doctrine of the *Pāñcarātra*. The *Mahābhārata* refers to

110. *Arcā* is mentioned as one of the seven places where worship could be offered. Vide -*Ṛgvidhāna* III 29 2, *Bh* XI 27 9. Eight kinds of images are enumerated : *Ibid*, XI 27 12.

111. *R* II. 6. 4

112. *Ibid* II. 71. 40, VII. 31. 13.

113. *Ibid* III. 12. 17-21.

114. *Ibid*. For a detailed treatment, see '*Rāmāyaṇa* and Temples' in BBRAS, XXIII. p. 242.

idols in temples[116] and to the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines[117] The *Harivaṁśa*[118] refers to the temple of Indrāṇī where the goddess was worshipped by Rukmiṇī The *Bhāgavata* refers to the *vyūha* doctrine of the *Pāñcarātra*,[119] the *arcā* form,[120] worship, temples[121] and *tāntrik* initiation[122] Many *Purāṇas* contain glorification of the holy places where temples are described[123]

All this evidence could not be summarily dismissed as baseless The glorification of the holy places could have been included in the *Purāṇas* at different periods, but long before such accounts were composed, the temples should have been in existence, though not in their present form The *Bhāgavata* refers to some holy places like the river Gaṅgā, Kurukṣetra, Naimiśa and others In the same context, the places where the idols of Viṣṇu are enshrined are glorified and shown as specially suitable for worship[124]

A passage cited above from the *Rāmāyaṇa* mentions also the names of deities other than Viṣṇu, indicating that they also

115 *VP.* V 18 58

116 Vide

देवता प्रतिमा चैव कम्पन्ति च हसन्ति च ।
वमन्ति रुधिरं चास्यैः स्विद्यन्ति प्रपतन्ति च ॥

Mbh VI 2 26

117 *Mbh* XII 342-359

118 *Harivaṁśa*, II 59 33, 34

119 *Bh* X 16 45, X 40 21

120 *Ibid* X 53 44-50, X 84 11

121 *Ibid* X 53 39-49, X. 79 12-15

122 *Ibid* XI 4 47-55, XI 11 37, XI. 27

123 The *Vāmana*, *Skānda* *Mārkaṇḍeya*, *Varāha*, *Brahma* and *Padma* *Purāṇas* glorify Tirumalai, the *Saura* glorifies temples of Śiva, the *Brahmāṇḍa* treats of Kāñcī and Ahobila, the *Skānda* glorifies Badarikāśrama and so on A reference may be made here to *TA* (X 43-47) which deals with the worship of Śivaliṅga

124. *Bh*. X 79

received worship in particular places. The passage in the *Mahabhārata* makes a general reference to the gods, which shows that deities other than Viṣṇu had their idols in temples for worship. The *Purāṇas* contain references to the temples of these gods All this indicates that idol worship, as enjoined in the *Āgamas*, must have been very ancient The structures to house these deities could have sprung up later, of which alone the *Purāṇas* have references and descriptions.

It must not be surprising, if references in the *Rāmāyana* to the various spots in hermitages for many deities should turn out to be Āgamic without any tinge of the use of *yantras* and *tāntrika mantras*. The *vyūha* doctrine of the *Pāñcarātra* refers to the names of Kṛṣṇa and the members of His family. This may be a later addition made at the end of the *Dvāparayuga*. Or, those names, which should have been in vogue long before that period, could have been given to the members in the family of Kṛṣṇa, just like the name 'Vāsudeva' Anyway, the *Mahābhārata* which must have taken a specific shape by 3000 B C [125] should justify this date as the lowermost limit for the prevalence of the Agamic doctrines

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125. V. Varadachari :
महाभारतकालनिर्णयः, संविद् IV. 1-14.

CHAPTER II

VALIDITY OF THE 'ĀGAMAS'

The authenticity of the *Agamas* has been questioned from about the beginning of the Christian era. There was objection to their validity in a general way and also to that of particular kinds of *Āgamas* The whole objection is based only on one point, namely, worship of God.

These who raise this objection, rest their arguments on the supposed non-Vedic character of the *Āgamas* The word 'non-Vedic' means that which is not Vedic, not based on what the *Vedas* stand for By 'Vedic' the *Vedas* and the *Vedāṅgas* are meant These are concerned with the performance of the rituals enjoined in the *Kalpasūtras* in accordance with the procedures recommended therein on the basis of the *Brāhmanas.* They do not uphold the exclusive worship of any single deity. On the other hand, the rituals have different deities to be worshipped according to the nature of the rites It is sacrilegious to offer worship to a deity in any ritual in which he is not to receive worship, in the place of another who is to receive it The *Agamas* which recommend strongly the worship of particular deities in an exclusive manner, go against the Vedic concept of deities Again, the *Āgamas* miss the Vedic concept of God Idol worship marks the Āgamic mode of adoring God The *Vedas* nowhere refer to the distinct concrete form of God, nor do they speak of adoring that form God is transcendental and also immanent, and so could not be comprehended by any one as having a finitized form. There is nothing in the world which can represent God, for whatever exists is neither transcendental, nor subtle enough to be immanent. Hence it is a sacrilege to conceive the idol or any other form as God

Secondly, in order to get qualified for performing the worship in the sacred fire, one must have investiture with the sacred thread (*upanayana*). And offering worship in the fire is the only mode of worship according to Vedic religion. The members of the first three castes alone are eligible to have *upanayana* Contrary to this practice, the *Āgamas* have allowed the Śūdras and women also to take part in offering worship to the deity. The qualification for this is initiation (*dīkṣā*) This is necessary for all and becomes the second qualification for the twice-born. There is no second initiation or special *dīkṣā* sanctioned by the *Vedas*, and so the *Agamas* have no validity as regards the worship of God.

Thirdly, the *Āgamas* prescribe *tāntrika mantras* for adoption in worship, so that they can be used by all, irrespective of their having had *upanayana*. This is criticised as an anti-Vedic practice that proves the *Āgamas* to be invalid.

Fourthly, the ceremony of installation (*pratiṣṭhā*) of an idol or any figure is unwarranted according to the Vedic rules of the rituals. There is invocation (*āvāhana*) and dismissal (*visarjana*) for a deity in Vedic ritual. The same cannot become applicable to idols in which the deities are ever present after installation. To add to non-Vedic practices, the *Āgamas* prescribe the performance of such things as *mudrā* and *nyāsa* as part of the act of worship. These too have no Vedic sanction and, besides, are meaningless.

Fifthly and lastly, the *Āgamas* enjoin the practice of certain cruel rites such as *māraṇa uccāṭana*, *vaśīkaraṇa*, *ākarṣaṇa śānti-karma*, *pauṣṭikakarma*, *vidveṣaṇa* and others. These are calculated and intended to do harm to others. A system which does not promote justice and good deeds and encourages, by enjoining, such acts as corrupt the mind of the performers, does not deserve to be followed. There are also other detestable practices such as drinking wine, eating flesh, taking fish,

gestures and sexual intercourse Five important detestable practices are set out below ·

> शाक्तास्तु मद्यं मांसं तथा मत्स्यो मुद्रा मैथुनमेव च ।
> पञ्चतत्त्वमिदं प्रोक्तं देवि निर्वाणहेतवे ।
> मकारपञ्चकं देवि देवानामपि दुर्लभम् ।
>
> *Guptasādhanetantra*, VII,

It is also argued that the origin of the *Āgamas* is to be solely traced to the practices of primitive tribes. Those who base their rituals on Vedic authority, would not accept the *Āgamas* as valid, not to speak of following the practices laid down in them. The life of the primitives is not governed by law or custom, nor based on ethical standards. Head-hunting vindictive pursuits and gruesome practices characterize the life of primitive peoples The *Āgamas*, it is asserted, took their rise among them or at least arose under the strong influence of their practices and so cannot be held as valid.

The objections noted above lose ground, when it is remembered that the *Āgamas* are very near the *Vedas*, rather based on the *Vedas* They cite the *Vedas* for authority and so cannot be treated as non-Vedic or anti-Vedic What is treated in the *Vedas* need not be treated in other texts New concepts and theories could have been evolved as a result of Vedic influence, and they do not, on that account, become non-Vedic. The whole of the *Veda*, the *Smṛti* texts, the conduct of those who know the *Vedas*, the conduct of the good and the satisfaction of the self become the sources of *dharma*.[126] All these cannot be declared to be invalid, because they are not treated or mentioned in the *Vedas*. The *Mīmāṃsā* school seeks to defend the Vedic authority for certain practices which do not have direct Vedic sanction, but are dealt with only in the *Smṛti*

126 *MS* II 6

texts. In such cases, the source of these practices is inferred to be some passage of the *Vedas*.[127]

Similarly, the monotheism of the *Āgamas* is a concept derived from Vedic sources The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* makes an emphatic statement that, among gods, Agni is the lowest and Viṣṇu the highest.[128] It is evident from this that Viṣṇu, being at the head of the divine beings, must have been held then as not only the Supreme Deity but also as one who is preferred to others for worship. This concept was developed in the *Āgamas* which is a proof to show that they are not non-Vedic For the same reason, idol worship, as enjoined in the *Āgamas*, needs to be treated as a religious act which is a logical extension of the monotheistic tendency. This is enough to concede that idol worship is not non-Vedic According to the *Varivasyārahasya*, the *Agamas* are *Smṛti* texts and are to be treated as supplements to the *Upaniṣads*.[129]

Secondly, it is true that the *Āgamas* enjoin a special initiation (*dīkṣā-viśeṣa*) as conferring a qualification for performing worship. It becomes an additional qualification for those who have *upanayana*. Such specific initiation is not non-Vedic, but is a Vedic practice, as it is enjoined also for performing certain sacrifices. Here the agent who is already qualified to perform the ritual by virtue of having had *upanayana*, is required to undergo a special initiation.[130] Thus the special initiation is not confined to the *Āgamas* alone.

127. *Mīmāṁsā-sūtras* I. 3. Vide: *Tantravārttika* on I 3 2

128. Vide·

अग्निर्वै देवानामवमो देवता विष्णुः परमस्तदन्तरेण सर्वा अन्या देवताः । *A Br.* I. 1. 1.

129. *Varivasyārahasya, śl* 6. *Cf.* Madhusūdanasarasvati: *Prasthānabheda*. p. 16

130. *Mīmāṁsā-sūtras*, X. 6. 57; X. 8. 12, XI. 2. 59, XI. 4. 20, 21 XII. 1. 25. Cf. *Pūs.* IV 1. 9, 10.

Thirdly, although the study of the *Vedas* is prohibited for Śūdras, there are some references which uphold their participation in the performance of sacrifices The following passage occurs in the *Āpastamba Śrautasūtras* (I 19 9) —

हविष्कृदेहीति ब्राह्मणस्य, हविष्कृदागाहीति राजन्यस्य,
हविष्कृदाद्रवेति वैश्यस्य, हविष्कृदाधावेति शूद्रस्य ।

Here the Śūdra is described as one preparing the *havis* or offering it in the same way as the members of the other three castes, though the verb differs in calling the offerer of oblation from each caste The hunter and architect are known to have been allowed to perform the sacrifice[131] The wheelwright is asked to ignite the holy fires[132] These persons are lower than the Śūdras in the social scale,[133] but they are permitted to take

131 निषादस्थपतिं याजयेत् ।

(*Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra* XXII 11. 11)

The wheelwright is permitted to have *upanayana* in the rainy season' (*Āpastamba Śrauta-sūtra*, V 3 18)

निषादरथकारयो राधानादग्निहोत्रं दर्शपूर्णमासौ च नियम्येते ।

(*Satyāṣāḍha Śrauta-sūtra*, III 1)

Vide

स्थपतिर्निषादः स्याच्छब्दसामर्थ्यात् ।
लिङ्गदर्शनाच्च ।

(*Mīmamsā-sūtras*, VI 1 51, 52)

132 रथकारोऽग्नीनादधीत ।

The *agni* to be used here must be of the *laukika* kind (*Bhāttadīpikā* on *ibid*)

वास्तुमयं रौद्रं चरु निर्वपेत् । एतया निषादस्थपतिं याजयेत् ।
तात्कालिकाचार्योपदेशाद्विना विद्यां संपाद्य धनिको निषादो रौद्रयागं कुर्यात् ।

(*Jaiminīya-nyāyamālā* on *ibid.*)

133 Vide

वैश्यायां क्षत्रियादुत्पन्नो माहिष्यः ।
शूद्रायां वैश्यादुत्पन्ना करिणी ॥

Yājñavalkya-smṛti, I. 95

माहिष्येण करिण्यां तु रथकारः प्रजायते ।
निषादः शूद्रकन्यायां स पारशव उच्यते ॥ *MS*. (X. 8).

an active part in the performance of the ritual. In order to make them get fully qualified on particular occasions, they are allowed to study and repeat the particular *mantras* when these rites are to be performed The same principle must apply to the Śūdras and women for performing worship The *Agamas* do not permit them to utter the Vedic *mantras*, but have evolved new *mantras* on the model of the Vedic ones These are *tāntrika mantras*, which not only these who are not qualified for Vedic study, but also others are asked to utilise. The Vedic *mantras* also have to be used by the twice-born. The *tantrika mantras* are created for use in certain practices which do not have Vedic *mantras* Thus the *Agamas* are more liberal in allowing the act of initiation (*dīkṣā*) to all, and this answers the second objection Provision in the form of *tāntrika mantras* which is thus made, silences the third objection.

Fourthly, the objection may be made to stand on the strength of a passage which declares that worship in the fire is for the Brahmins, that in the heart for those who could perform *yoga*, that in the idol for the unlearned and that in all these three for those who view the world impartially [134] This may be admitted, but a comment is required here Absence of the spirit of devotion which characterizes the culture of the *Vedas*, need not actually mean rejection of the idol Even those whose outlook in life is characterized by detachment require a concrete form for worship. The question of the aspirant being unlearned or otherwise is immaterial Worship of the idol is discussed in the *Agamas* and recommended by great sages like Sanatkumāra, Bharadvāja, Atri, Kāśyapa and others who were the staunch followers of the *Vedas* They could not be regarded as wanting in wisdom in preaching idol worship to various audiences who were also, like them, following the practices laid

134. Vide

अग्नौ तिष्ठति विप्राणां हृदि तिष्ठति योगिनाम् ।
प्रतिमास्वप्रबुद्धानां सर्वत्र समदर्शिनाम् ॥

down in Vedic texts. Idol worship, which the *Āgamas* recommend, should be looked upon as deriving its authority from the Vedic practices themselves, though the Vedic texts may not make a direct recommendation to that effect The *Āgamas* enjoin also worship of gods in fire and meditation through *yoga* and, as such, could not be taken to go against Vedic authority.

Any figure made out of any material cannot receive worship The presence of the deity will have to be infused into the idol, for which purpose Vedic *mantras* are primarily employed This ritual cannot be called non-Vedic For the purpose of ensuring the installation of the immanent God in the idol or *yantra*, *pratiṣṭhā* is required to be done *Mantra*, *nyāsa*, *bhūtaśuddhi* and *mudrā* are quite necessary to offer worship to God who has taken His abode in a finitized form

Mantras are classified into *bija*, *pinda*, *saṁjñā* and *nāda*. This has full relevance to practical utility, as they require to be changed according to the deity whose adoration is to be undertaken. This is not meddling with Vedic *mantras*. A change in *mantra* involves the introduction of alterations in the case-suffixes, number and other parts of the words occurring in the *Vedas*, so as to suit those *mantras* for application in the particular contexts. This is sanctioned in the *Mīmāṁsā*.

Vide:

प्राकृतस्थानपतितपदार्थान्तरकार्यतः ।
ऊहः प्रयोगो विकृत ऊह्यमानतयोदितः ॥

(*Jaiminīya-nyāyamālā*, IX. 1. 1).

Such a change has the sanction of the grammarians also.

Vide:

रक्षोहागमलघ्वसन्देहाः प्रयोजनम् ॥

(Kātyāyana's *Vārttika*, cited by Patañjali in the *Paspaśāhnika* of his *Mahābhāṣya*.)

A change in the *Vaidika mantra* is permitted on this principle. For instance, the passage, '*Agnaye justam nirvapāmi*' which is to be used while offering cooked cakes to Agni (*āgneya caru*) must change into '*Sūryāya justam nirvapāmi*' when the cake is to be offered to the sun[135] Such a change is necessitated, even according to Vedic texts, as the deities to whom the offerings are to be made are many and *mantras* are not available for each offering to be made to each one of those deities Though each deity has a *mantra*[136] it is required to be changed according as the occasion demands Though the *Āgamas* intend to enjoin the exclusive worship of a particular deity, other deities are not fully dropped out from the purview of the ritual or worship. These deities form part of the retinue of the principal deity Hence *mantras* are required to worship them. Thus *tāntrika mantras* arose on the foundation of the *Vaidika mantras* On this account, they do not lose their validity[137]

The syllables or letters in a *Vaidika mantra* have a deity presiding over each of them[138] Similarly, each letter in the alphabetical system has a deity The word, '*bījākṣara*' means the foundational part of a *mantra*. This is not peculiar to the *Agamas* alone The Vedic texts contain many of them,[139] from **which the** *Agamas* have developed their own list[140] The syllable *him* is used in the Vedic texts,[141] So a further development

135 *Jaiminīya-nyāyamāla*, II 1 9

136 *RV* III 62 10.

137. Vide.

श्रुतिश्च द्विविधा वैदिकी तान्त्रिकी चेति ।

(Kulluka on *MS* II 1)

138. *ABr.* II 3 6, II. 5 5

139. *Ibid.* VII. 3. 6; *Gopatha Brāhmana*, X, 1 24, *Aitareya Āranyaka*. VII 8, *Chand. Up.* 1. 1 1. *Aśvalayana Gṛhyasūtra*, IV 8 34.

140 *Pranava, hrīm, śrīm, aim, klīm* and others are *bījākṣaras.*

141. *ABr.* II. 12. Cf. *Chānd. Up.* II. 13. 1.

of such syllabic sounds must be taken as indicative of the pro-Vedic character of the *Āgamas*.

Similarly, *nyāsa* is a practice which may be traced to Vedic texts[142] *Karanyāsa* and *aṅgulinyāsa* form part of many of the daily religious practices like the adoration of *saṃdhyā*. Either the *nyāsa* must be traced to a Vedic source to defend this daily practice or practices of *saṃdhyā* must be traced to Āgamic sources

The drawing of *mandalas* and the worship of *yantras* could also be traced to Vedic sources[143] Likewise, *mudrā* which is gesture conveying one's intentions, is traceable to the *Śatapatha-brāhmana*[144]

Lastly, the *Āgamas* are condemned for enjoining cruel practices It is true that they do so They do not stop there. They recommend the slaying of the enemy The *Vedas* also are not free from rituals for such purposes[145] If such practices are claimed to be not cruel on the ground that they are enjoined by the *Vedas*, it is not possible to justify the expiatory rites[146] (*prāyaścitta*) which are to be performed to get freed from their evil results The *Vedas* also recommend certain practices for malevolent sorcery (*abhicāra*),[147] slaying[148] and enchanting

142 *ŚBr* VII 5 2 17, *Aitareya Āranyaka*, III 2 1 2, III 2 5 2.

143 *ŚBr* I 1 18, VI 1 1 6, XI 7 1, *Kauśikasūtra* LXXVI 21. The lotuslike drawings of *cakras* are described in *AV* X 2 32, 34.

144 Vide *ŚBr* III 1 3 25

145. *ŚBr* III 9 1, 7, V 5 4, 1, XII 7 2, 3 Cf *RV*, X 127 1

146. *Āpastamba Dharmasūtras*, I 9 26, 27.

147 *SY* 7 3, Vide

खट् पट् च्छिन्धी भिन्धी कट् इति वाचः क्रूराणि ।

TA IV 27.

148. *RV*, VII, 104, X 145.

others.[149] The *Vedas* also are not free from sensual practices.[150] Since many of these practices are traceable to the Vedic texts and the rest could be explained as having arisen under the influence of the Vedic rituals, there is no need to look to primitive society as the source for all these practices.

The authority of the *Āgamas* is strongly upheld by Jayantabhaṭṭa, who flourished under King Śaṅkaravarman of Kashmir (883–902 A.D) He is the author of the *Nyāyamañjarī*, a treatise on the *Nyāya* system and the *Āgamāḍambara*, an allegorical play. In the former, he divides *Āgamas* into two kinds, one opposed to *Vedas* and the other not opposed to them. The *Āgamas* of the Buddhists and others are opposed to the *Vedas* and so are invalid. Others are not opposed to the *Vedas*, but enjoin practices which are subsituted for the Vedic practices. Being an exponent of the *Nyāya* system which believes *Vedas* to be the composition of God, the author admits the *Āgamas* as valid, as they are also the compositions of God. People who have been following ways of life based on Vedic authority, also follow Āgamic practices. That these practices are opposed to Vedic practices is not a strong ground for rejecting the authority of the *Āgamas*. The scheme of the *pramāṇas* and the aim in life (*puruṣārtha*) to be attained are common to all the *Agamas* and, as such, their validity does not suffer because of the mutual references contradicting each other's practices. If injury (*hiṁsā*) is enjoined in the *Āgamas*, the same is found in the *Vedas* also, and so both are equally valid. All *Āgamas* are based on the *Vedas*. It is possible to trace, through inference, the authority for certain practices which are not based on Vedic and Āgamic sources.[151]

149. *TBr.* II, 3. 1. 10.

150. Cf. *Vāmadevya upāsana* in *Chānd. Up.* II, 13. 1. 2,
Cf. *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, II. 3. 7. 3

151. *Nyāyamañjarī*, pp. 635-645.

The *Āgamāḍambara* is a play in four acts presenting some schools of thought which prevailed in Kashmir during the 9th century. The opinions of the various schools, both *āstika* and *nāstika*, are presented by their adherents. Jayanta's attitude towards them is one of tolerance. There were the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava schools also. The author and his patron are shown as taking action against those sects or *Āgamas* which carried out or enjoined corrupt practices like those of the Nīlāmbaras, Bauddhas, Jainas and the extreme Śaivas. The Śaivas who were following desirable practices and the Vaiṣnavas who adopted the *Pāñcarātra* way of life are declared to be leading virtuous lives, though they favoured Āgamic authority, ignoring the direct dictates of the *Vedas*. The traditions of these schools which, following the *Āgamas*, have been uninterruptedly continuing, were adopted by the enlightened people, and so the *Agamas* are declared as authoritative. Whichever deity the *Agamas* glorify, they are valid, since they are the compositions of a divine being. The spirit of tolerance breathes in the following *śloka* which declares that many could be the courses or approaches to attain Reality.

Vide

नानाविधैरागममार्गभेदैरादिश्यमाना बहवोऽभ्युपायाः ।
एकत्र ते श्रेयसि संपतन्ति सिन्धौ प्रवाहा इव जाह्नवीयाः ॥

The analogy of many door-ways leading to the interior of a mansion is suggested in another stanza

प्रवेष्टुकामा बहवो पुमांसः पुरे यथैकत्र महागृहे वा ।
द्वारान्तरेणापि विशन्ति केचित् तथोत्तमे धाम्नि मुमुक्षवोऽपि ॥

That the *Agamas* do not contradict one another is stated in:

परमं पुरुषार्थं प्रति न चागमानां विरोधिता कचित् ।
आदिश्यते हि सर्वैः कैवल्यं तुल्यमेव फलम् ॥[152]

152 Refer to 'A New Play of the 10th Century, the *Agamaḍambara* of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta of Kashmir', printed in the *Samskṛta Raṅga Annual* III

On the other hand, the *Kūrma Purāṇa*[153] condemns several religious schools for their practices. *Kāpāla, Nākula Vāma, Bhairava, Pūrva, Paścima Pāñcarātra* and *Pāśupata* are mentioned in this connection It is true that some of these schools were adopting reprehensible and disgusting practices The question of their going against Vedic authority is not the main concern. As Jayanta pointed out, they were objectionable to good taste. The practices enjoined by the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava *Agamas* were free from them. They were perhaps included in the condemnation as they followed a different cosmology and theology not traceable to the *Vedas*. The passage in the *Kūrma Purāṇa* should have meant only this; and while listing the non-Vedic schools, the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava schools were also clubbed along with them In the light of the evidence and reasoning given already in defence of the validity of the *Āgamas*, this adverse criticism should be understood to relate only to anti-Vedic schools for their enjoining objectionable practices or for their lack of implicit subservience to Vedic authority

The *Bhāgavata Purana*, on the contrary, recommends the Āgamic mode of worship which is referred to by the other name '*tāntrika*'. One should take to the injunctions of the *Vedas* to become free from the results of *karma*. He who would tear away the knot of the heart must worship Kṛṣṇa according to the rules laid down in the *Tantras* He has to receive the grace from the preceptor and guidance from him to pursue the Āgamic course. He must adore the Supreme Deity in a form which is to his liking. *Bhūtaśuddhi* and dedication of himself to God should follow next

153 Vide

कापालं नाकुलं वामं भैरव पूर्वपश्चिमम् ।
पाञ्चरात्रं पाशुपतं तथाऽन्यानि...... ॥

(Kurma Purāṇa, II. 16. 15.)

Vide :

वेदोक्तमेव कुर्वाणो निःसङ्गोऽर्पितमीश्वरे ।
नैष्कर्म्यां लभते सिद्धिं रोचनार्था फलश्रुतिः ॥

य आशु हृदयग्रन्थिं निर्जिहीर्षुः परमात्मनः ।
विधिनोपचरेद्देवं तन्त्रोक्तेन च केशवम् ॥

लब्धानुग्रह आचार्यात्तेन सन्दर्शितागमः ।
महापुरुषमभ्यर्चेन्मूर्त्याभिमतया आत्मनः ॥

शुचिः संमुखमासीनः प्राणसंयमनादिभिः ।
पिण्डं विशोध्य संन्यासकृतरक्षोऽर्चयेद्धरिम् ॥

(*Bh* XI. 3 46-49)

Elsewhere, both the *Veda* and *Tantra* are stated as being followed for adoring the Lord

तं तदा पुरुषं मर्त्या महाराजोपलक्षणम् ।
यजति वेदतन्त्राभ्यां परं जिज्ञासवो नृप ॥

Ibid XI 5 28

एवं क्रियायोगपथैः पुमान् वैदिकतान्त्रिकैः ।
अर्चयन्नुभयतः सिद्धिं मत्तो विन्दत्यभीप्सितान् ॥

Ibid XI 27. 49.

Those who denounce the authority of the *Āgamas* may refuse to accept this testimony on the ground that the *Bhāgavata* is of late origin. In that case, the evidence of the *Kūrma Purāṇa* must also be discountenanced. The difficulty lies in ascertaining the probable periods when the *Purānas* as a whole or any of them in particular was compiled.[154] It must, however, be

154 Abhinavagupta (C. 1000 A D) cites passages from the *Bhāgavata* (XI 20 17), mentioning the portion as *ekādaśa-skandha* in his *Gītārthasangraha*, the commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, (XIV 8) This shows that at a period before the tenth century, it was held to be authoritative.

admitted that there were accretions to the originally compiled texts from time to time, but even here the dates when such additions where made are not known. The two *Purāṇas* noted above make specific references to the *Āgamas* and the mode of worship based on them. This makes it clear that the *Āgamas* were at least available when the *Purāṇas*, like the two above mentioned, were getting finalised. Therefore, the validity of the *Āgamas* is a settled fact, and it must be said that the way of life which the Hindus lead at present is chiefly guided by Āgamic precepts and Vedic authority.

CHAPTER III

CLASSIFICATION OF AGAMAS

The *Āgamas* advocate the adoration of particular deities to the exclusion of others who form part of the retinue of the principal deity. More than one deity enjoys the privilege of such prominence The Vaiṣṇava, Śākta, Śaiva, Gāṇapatya, Svāyambhuva and Cāndra are most well known kinds glorifying particular deities. The Pāśupata, Kālāmukha, Cīna and Jaina are also held to be types of *Āgamas*. The Saura also is added to the list Of these, Pāśupata and Kālāmukha are to be brought under Śaiva, and Cīna and Jaina are of the *nāstika* kind. Viṣṇu, Śakti (standing for the female principle identified with Durgā or Pārvatī), Śiva, Ganapati (Vināyaka), Brahmā, Candra and Sūrya are the principal deities glorified. In course of time, all of them have become extinct, except those of the Śākta, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava varieties

Among modern scholars who have been making an intensive study of the *Āgamas*, there is a tendency to treat the Śākta *Āgamas* as the earliest among the *Tantras* and as influencing the development of other *Āgamas*, though not their origin While arriving at this conclusion, the role played by Śakti in the other *Āgamas* is stressed All the three *Āgamas*, Śākta, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava, agree that Śakti plays a prominent role. While Śakti is the prominent deity in the Śākta *Āgamas*, the other two recognize Śakti as never dissociated from Śiva or Viṣṇu The question is one of the position occupied by Śakti Whether she has an independent or dependent status, the fact remains that she has to play a significant role To arrive at this conclusion, there is no need to look upon the dependent nature of Śakti as derived from her status. Every Vedic deity is looked

upon as possessing power, which is ever with that deity. This concept is inherited by the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava *Agamas*. This does not mean that the Śākta *Agama* should have been the earliest in origin. Mutual influences should have been there. All the *Āgamas* must have had a common source, but their development need not have not been uniform in point of time.

The Śākta system believes in the all-embracing potency and supremacy of Śakti, treated as a female principle. Śakti is considered as a goddess and hence this *Āgama* is called also as the Devi *Āgama*. It is held that Śakti worship was introduced from Persia.[155] Others believe it to have risen in Bengal and spread to Assam, Nepal, Tibet and China.[156] Śakti is God in mother-form. In her static, transcendent aspect, she is of the same nature as Śiva. Śiva is unchanging consciousness and Śakti is its changing power. The self is one with the transcendent spirit. Mind and body are the manifestations of Supreme Power. Thus the philosophy of the Śākta *Agamas* is *advaitic*. The self must realise this through discipline, which is at first external through material forms and symbols, and later through *yoga* when Śakti is unfolded and awakened.

The worshipper has all the objects of enjoyment before him, but is not disturbed by them. These objects are *mantra*, *māmsa*, *madya*, *mudrā* and *maithuna*. Though this could be said to be characteristic of Śākta worship, certain texts offer substitutes.[157] As a result of this mode of worship, the position of women has gained importance.

155 For a discussion on this by P. C. Bagchi, see *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol IV, pp 224-225

156 Philip Rawson, *The Art of Tantra*, p. 15

157 The Paramānanda school does this. Vide, *The Tantras: Studies in their Origin and Literature*, pp 40-41

The texts of this *Āgama* speak of the system as delivered by Devī, listened to by Śiva and approved by Vāsudeva (i.e., Kṛṣṇa treated as the brother of Devī) Sometimes, Devī listens to the discourse of Śiva The derivation of the word '*Āgama*', is therefore given as rising (*ā*) from Śiva or Devī, reaching Devī or Śiva (*ga*) and approved (*ma* or *mata*) by Vāsudeva [158] They are classified as *dakṣiṇa* based on the *Vedas*, *Smṛtis* and *Purāṇas*· *vāma*, relying on the *Vedas* and *Tantras*, and *uttara*, having the authority of the *Vedas* and the utterances of the preceptor The texts which are called *Āgamas* are seventyseven in number, five called as *Śubhagama*, sixtyfour as *Kaula* and eight as *Miśra*, The *Āgamas* of the *dakṣiṇa* variety declare that *Tantra* is part of *Veda* which is *vidyā* and *Kaula* is the philosophy [159] Those who do not observe the rites of the Vedic kind are disqualified for the Śākta cult [160] Important works on the Śākta system are the encyclopaedic *Prapañcasāra* attributed to Śaṅkarācārya, Lakṣmanadeśika's *Śāradātilaka*, Bhāskararāya's *Varivasyārahasya* and *Lalitā-sahasranāma-bhāṣya*, Krsnānanda Āgama Vāgīśa's *Tantrasāra*, Pūrnānandahamsaparivrājaka's *Śrītattvacintāmaṇi* and others Lakṣmīdhara's (1497-1539) commentary on the *Saundaryalaharī* contains valuable information on the cult of Śakti

The Śaiva *Āgamas* hold that Śiva is the Supreme Deity ever associated with Śakti, identified with Devī or Pārvatī Several schools are mentioned as coming under this head. They are

158 Vide

आगतं पञ्चवक्त्रात्तु गतं च गिरिजानने ।
मतं च वासुदेवस्य च तस्मादागममुच्यते ॥

Pingalāmata cited *Ibid* p 2.

159 *Prāṇatoṣaṇī*, 70, *Mahānirvānatantra*, I 18 19, *Mahārudrayāmala*, I 15, II 2

160 *Paśupatisūtras*, I 23 14 ; *Sūkṣma-tantra*, III. 26

Śaiva, Pāśupata, Kārunikasiddhānta and Kāpālika.[161] Kālāmukha replaces the third one in another list[162] The *Vīrāgama*, one of the texts, enumerates *Sāmānyaśaiva*, *Pūrvaśaiva*, *Miśraśaiva* and *Śuddhaśaiva*[163] *Vāma*, *Pāśupata*, *Soma*, *Lāṅgala*, *Bhairava*, *Kāpāla* and *Nākula* are the schools enumerated elsewhere[164] Perhaps Lāṅgalas and Nākulas represent the *Nakulīśapāśupata* The acceptable classification falls under three heads, namely, Pāśupata, Siddhānta or Śaivasiddhānta, and Pratyabhijñā

Lakuli (105–30 A D) is said to have taught the *Paśupatisūtras* to his pupils These were commented on by Kauṇḍinya (c.600 A.D) *Pati jiva*, *yoga*, *niyama* and *duḥkānta* are the principles standing respectively for the Lord, self, meditation, discipline and *mokṣa* respectively. *Sadyojāta*, *Vāmadeva*, *Aghora*, *Tatpurusa* and *Īśāna* are the five *mantras* taught by Lakuli *Praṇava* is to be meditated upon. Immediate union (*sāyujya*) with Śiva is the goal It is wrong to assume that the rules of caste and orders are not observed, for the Śūdras and women are excluded from initiation according to this system[165]

The *Śaivasiddhānta* admits three sections in its *Āgamas* They are *Vidyā*, *Kriyā* and *Yoga*. The first is concerned with *Pati*, *paśu* and *pāśa* '*Pati*' is Paramaśiva having the five activities of creation, maintenance, dissolution, giving *mokṣa* and obscuration : He is the instrumental cause of the world The *paśu* is the self which is atomic in size, while *pāśa* is power which is impurity *karma*, *māyā* and restraint The second section deals

161 *Bhāmatī* on Śaṁkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, II 2 37

162 *Śrībhāṣya*, II 2 35

163 XI D 5502.

164 See *Vīramitrodaya*, I 22

165. *Paśupatisūtras* with Kauṇḍinya's *Bhāṣya*, pp 78-79.

with *mantra*, *japa*, *homa*, *dīksā* and other such matters. The third section deals with thirtysix *tattvas* and the *siddhis*. The self is real and ever-conscious luminosity Everything is the manifestation of Paramaśiva The school is *advaitic* in its outlook

The *Āgamas* are twentyeight, brought under the four heads of *Kāmika*, *Kārana*, *Suprabheda* and *Vāthūla* It is held that all these *Āgamas* issued forth from the five faces of Śiva (i e, *Sadyojāta*, *Vāma*, *Aghora*, *Īśāna* and *Tatpurusa*) Among them the *Vīra* and *Vāthûla* kinds are the most important The worship of *Śivalinga* is the means of realizing the Ultimate Reality.

In Tamil Nadu, this *Siddhānta* has had a rich development through the *Tirumantiram* of Tirumūlar. Meykandadeva of the 13th century composed the *Śivajñānabodhasūtra*, a counterpart of the *Brahmasūtras* It preaches that one should meditate on the self being identical with Śiva It has a Sanskrit commentary by Śivāgrayogin of the 13th century in the *Śivajñānabhāsya*.

Śrīkanthaśivācārya (c 1400 A.D) wrote the *Brahmamīmāmsā*, a commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* upholding the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* aspect of *Vedānta* and propounding that Śiva with Śakti is the Supreme Being. On this commentary was written the *Śivārkamanidīpikā*, a super-commentary by Appayyadīkṣita

The other sects of Śaivism such as *Pāśupata*, *Lākula*, *Kālāmukha* etc lost their independent existence, having merged in a way and giving rise to *Viśesadvaita* or Vīraśaivism which spread in Āndhra and Karnātaka regions. The founder was Reṇukācārya [166] The *Brahmasūtras* were commented on by Śrīkarapaṇḍitārādhya[167] in the *Śrīkarabhāsya*. The *Vedas* and Śaiva

166 He flourished in the 13th century A D

167. His date is fixed between 1300 and 1400, A.D
Vide Hayavadana Rao Introduction to *Śrīkarabhāṣya*, p. 3

Āgamas are treated as authorising practices such as wearing the *rudrākṣa*, *Śivaliṅga* and others Śiva is held to reside in six places (*satsthala*) namely, the five senses and the mind He must be visualized in them Every act must be surrendered to Him.

Śaivism in Kashmir accepts ninetytwo *Āgamas* which were held to be based on *Dvaita*, *Advaita* and *Dvaitādvaita* The *Dvaita* and *Dvaitādvaita* became amalgamated into a single group called *Siddhānta* These *Āgamas* preached sixtyfour systems of Śiva cults of which *Trika* is one *Tāntric* domination was marked in *Trika* What exactly this name denotes is not clear [168] The *Trika* has three sub-groups called *Pratyabhijñāśastra*, *Āgamaśāstra* and *Spandaśāstra* The *Pratyabhijñāśāstra* represents the philosophical aspect of *Trika* The *Āgamaśāstra* deals with the *tāntrika* practices of Śaivism The *Spandaśāstra* deals with the Śaiva doctrines as formulated in *Agamas*, amplifying the fundamental principles dealt with in them This division recognized *Anavopāya* also called *Kriyopāya*, *Śaktopāya*, and *Śāmbhavopāya* as the means to be blessed with divine grace which is called *Śaktipāta* [169] The first is concerned with the observance of the rituals, the second which is also called *Jñānopāya* with the activities of the mind, and the last with meditation on *Śivatattva* The *Siddhānta* and the second and third subgroups of the *Trika* were more concerned with the ritualistic aspects of the *Agamas*, though the philosophical aspect was not left out The *Pratyabhijñāśāstra* gives predominance to the philosophical aspect, leaving the Āgamic and ritualistic aspects in the background.

The Ultimate Reality in the system is Maheśvara who has two aspects, namely *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*, which stand respectively for universal consciousness and physical activity *Prakāśa*

168 *Abhinavagupta A Historical and Philosophical Study*, p 170

169 *Introduction to 'Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya'*, p 17; *Śivadṛṣṭi*, IV 118-120

is pure luminosity and *spanda* is vibration, that is, activity. Maheśvara has self-dependent power which evolves the variegated world of Nature, having *prakāśa* as the substratum for manifestations and *vimarśa* as the process of manifestation going on in this substratum This manifestation is called *ābhāsa* which is real The subject and object of knowledge are both manifestations of the Supreme Being, Maheśvara The phenomenon of knowledge is like the rise of two waves of the sea of universal consciousness. One of these has the capacity to reflect and the other is free from it. The former represents the self and the latter inert matter. On account of nescience, the self feels bound and considers itself to be a separate entity Final release consists in the recognition by the self that it is identical with Maheśvara This is called *Pratyabhijñā* and hence the name of this subgroup of *Trika*[170] The manifested world is analysed into thirtysix *tattvas* which the *Siddhānta* admits

The concepts of *Ānavopāya* and *Śaktopāya* explain that *jñāna* and *karma* together constitute the means for getting this recognition[171] *Karma*, enjoined in the *Vedas*, is to be done without expecting rewards for it[172] The *Agama* and *Spanda* aspects of *Trika* are not completely left out in the *Pratyabhijñā* system

'*Pratyabhijñā*' is not actually the name of a Kashmir school of Śaivism, but only of an aspect of the *Trika* school

170 Vide

तस्माज्ज्ञेयं समग्रैकवस्तु शैवं व्यवस्थितम् ।
तथा स्मरणयोगाच्च स्मर्यते किं तथाविधम् ॥
यादृग्दृष्टं दृष्टता स्यादथवा ज्ञानमेव तत् ।
दृष्टस्मरणयोरैक्ये स्थिते तदुपपद्यते ।
तथा सा प्रत्यभिज्ञानात् स एवायमिति स्थितिः ॥

Śivadṛṣṭi, IV. 118-20.

171 Vide Abhinavagupta *Bhagavadgītārthasangraha*, on III 4.

172 *Ibid* XVIII 2.

The Śaiva *Āgamas* were given a monistic interpretation by Tryambaka (c. 400 A.D.); the *Śivadṛṣṭi* of Somānanda (850 A D) gives for the first time a systematic exposition of the system He was therefore the founder of the school His son and pupil, Utpaladeva, composed the *Pratyabhijñā sūtra* and the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-kārikā* with his own glosses thereon The greatest contributor was Abhinavagupta (c. 1050 A D) His *Tantrāloka* is encyclopaedic in range, dealing with all the schools of Kashmir Śaivism He commented upon Utpaladeva and many Śaiva *Agamas* and wrote glosses on what others had written on them The *Mālinīvijaya-vārttika*, *Parātriṃśikā-vṛtti*, and *Paramārthasāra* could be mentioned in this connection

The place for Śakti is thus prominent in the Śākta *Āgamas* only Its importance in others is in subordination to God It plays an important role in Kashmir Śaivism The *Śaivasiddhānta* in South India has received a powerful impact from the concept of *Śakti* in the Śākta *Āgamas*, as a result of which Pārvatī has gained prominence along with Śiva and bears several names

The *Vaiṣṇava Āgamas* glorify Viṣṇu as the Supreme Being to the exclusion of other deities They treat the Ultimate Reality as not mere Viṣṇu but Viṣṇu with Śrī While there are several names for Viṣṇu, the use of the word 'Vaiṣṇava' as an epithet for these *Āgamas* shows that they must be closely related to the *Vedas* where He is mentioned primarily by this name

Most modern scholars in India and abroad hold that both Viṣṇu and Rudra occupy subordinate positions in the *Vedas* and that Vaiṣṇavism as a religion arose later than Śaivism.[173] This view requires careful examination

The *Vedas* (particularly *Rgveda*) have gained their present form through the efforts of Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana who acquired the

173 Vide B K. Goswami '*Bhakti*' *cult in Ancient India*: Introduction, p XVII

title of Vyāsa[174] The need to arrange the *Vedas*, under the direction of his father, Parāśara,[175] must have been felt because all the *Vedas* during that period must have been mixed up so that the clear distinction of each *Veda* could not be made So Vyāsa was asked to arrange them in order. He picked out the *rks* and prepared the *Rgveda* and similarly the other *Vedas*, *Brāhmanas* and other portions, following some principles[176] Certainly, the arrangement of the hymns was not made in the chronological order or with reference to the superiority of one deity over another It is therefore futile to attempt to find out which *rks* were composed earlier and which later Equally hard is it to determine whether Rudra or Viṣṇu, Savitṛ or Varuna was the earliest deity adored by the ancient seers of India So the question of the relative prominence of any deity in the *Rgveda* cannot be answered Visnu and Rudra could have been held in high regard then. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is not proper to assume that some deities were prominent in the *Rgveda* and lost their position later to Viṣṇu and Rudra who thus emerged into pre-eminence after having occupied subordinate positions earlier

Again, Sūrya, Varuṇa, Yama and others are still objects of worship, though not with as much veneration as Viṣṇu and Rudra It is not possible to pick out the specific traits of the deities from the *Rgveda*, since all of them have hymns addressed to them and are offered oblations in the sacred fire Yet, a close, comparative study of the few hymns addressed to Viṣṇu and Rudra would show that people depended more on these deities

174 Vide

विव्यास वेदान् यस्मात्स तस्माद्व्यास इति स्मृतः ।

MBh Ādi.64-130,

175 *VP* III 3 4

176 ततस्स ऋच उद्धृत्य ऋग्वेद कृतवान् मुनिः ।
यजूंषिश्च यजुर्वेदं सामवेदं च सामभिः ॥

VP III, 4, 13,

for their security and well-being than on others While Viṣṇu offered protection to the people providing them with the means for happy living,[177] Rudra was looked upon as a terrible deity ready to award punishment to wrong doers Naturally, the sages prayed to Rudra for pardon and for gifts enabling them to lead a prosperous life with kith and kin [178] This explanation could be offered to justify the continued primacy which Viṣṇu and Rudra have been enjoying

While studying the nature of Vaiṣṇavism, it becomes necessary to take into account the development of the Viṣṇu cult in the source books Apart from the *Vedas*, there are the epics, the *Purāṇas* and other such works. The difficulty of getting evidence to determine the antiquity of the cult is immense, since the dates of these source-books are yet to be fixed with a fair degree of accuracy The tradition of the Hindus, however, fixes the periods of these sources at a very ancient date Modern researchers find these dates unacceptable However, it must be admitted that dates as arrived at by modern research also have their own limitations as regards accuracy The date of the compilation of the *Mahābhārata* may not be far later than the beginning of the Kaliyuga, when the war described in the epic was fought. This date is fixed at 3102 B C [179] The *Rāmāyaṇa* which is cited[180] and whose author is mentioned[181] in the *Mahābhārata* must be more ancient and definitely before the beginning of the Kaliyuga The *Purāṇas* are held to be the compositions of Vyāsa, the author of the *Mahābhārata*, and so are to be placed about the beginning of the Kaliyuga The *Bhagavadgītā* forms part of the *Mahābhārata*

177 *RV*. I 154

178 *Ibid* II, 33.

179 See under *fn* 125

180 *Mbh Droṇa*, c XLIII 85, 86

181 *Ibid* 85

At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the accretions, losses, changes and interpolations which have entered into these texts from time to time. The *Mahābhārata* is said to have been available in its present form from about the beginning of the Christian era[182] This, however, does not prove that further changes did not take place after this period. It can only be said that by the beginning of the Christian era the two epics were available more or less in their present forms and known by their present names The same must be said of the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Purānas*. Curiously enough, the *Purāṇas* have undergone several changes which make it difficult to identify their genuine portions The *Viṣṇupurāna* is mentioned as a Vaisṇava text in the Tamil classic, *Manimekhalai*,[183] which is to be placed much earlier than 6th century A D, when Buddhism flourished unhampered at Kāñci before the renaissance of Śaivism and Vaisnavism there under the patronage of the Pallava rulers This *Purāna* must have become well known before the Tamil epic was written It will not be wrong to place it two centuries at least before 4th century A D, when the *Manimekhalai* was written

The *Bhāgavatapurāna* presents a problem regarding its date. Its contents are undoubtedly very old The spirit of devotion to God premeates it But the text is not mentioned by Śaṅkara (8th century A D) and Rāmānuja (1017-1137 A D) This, however, is only negative evidence The *Visnupurāna* was then available to serve the purpose of *upabrmhana*[184], and the other *Purānas*, because their contents were more or less the same,

182 Weber *Indian Literature*, p 186

183 *Kadal-vannan purānam*, *Manimekhalai*, XXVII. 98

184, Vide
उपबृंहणं नाम विदितसकलवेदार्थानां स्वयोगमहिमसाक्षात्कृत-
वेदतत्त्वार्थानां वाक्यैस्स्वावगतवेदवाक्यार्थव्यक्तीकरणम् ।

might have been ignored. The *Bhāgavata* can therefore be placed along with the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*. It must however be understood that the *Bhagavata*[185] contains references to certain occurrences which the *Mahābhārata* treats.

There were four currents of thought on Godhead, all of which were promoting salient and dominant traits which later on came to be identified as displayed by Viṣṇu. These were about Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Bhagavān and Vāsudeva, the theistic character of which could be traced to different sources. Viṣṇu is already a Vedic deity. Nārāyaṇa gets glorified in the *Mahābhārata*. 'Bhagavan' is the Lord of the *Bhagavadgītā*, *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and *Bhāgavata*. Vāsudeva is prominent in the *Viṣnupurāna*. Omnipresence, omnipotence, readiness to come down to sufferers, offering them relief from their misery, displaying miracles to convince them of His greatness and willingness to forgive the sinners and even those who offend Him are some of the features of the Deity who is widely mentioned in the sources listed above. These traits have made it possible to regard all the four names as standing for one Deity, so that the specific features and concepts found associated with each in the respective sources came to be attributed to that one Deity. The fusion of these currents has already taken place in the source books, which must be looked upon as records of the concepts when they took a definite shape.

The *Vedas* do not refer to any of these names except Viṣṇu and perhaps to Nārāyana. The *maṅgalaśloka*,[186] the *Nārāyaṇīya* section[187] and other passages in the *Mahabhārata* refer to

185. *Bh* VII. 1 44, also see *fn.* 154.

186. नारायणं नमस्कृत्य नरं चैव नरोत्तमम् ।
देवीं सरस्वतीं व्यासं ततो जयमुदीरयेत् ॥

187. *Mbh. Śānti.* CCCLIII–CCCLX.

the name 'Nārāyaṇa' Bhīṣma refers to Kṛṣṇa as *Brahman*,[188] Nārāyaṇa,[189] Viṣṇu[190] and Vāsudeva[191] The universal form (*viśvarūpa*) which Kṛṣṇa displayed to Arjuna is referred to as the form of Viṣṇu in the *Anugītā*[192] of the *Mahābhārata*. Yudhiṣṭhira calls Kṛṣṇa as Bhagavān[193] Mārkaṇḍeya refers to having been informed by the Deity whom he noticed during the cosmic deluge that He was Nārāyaṇa[194]

Though Kṛṣṇa does not openly speak of Himself as *Brahman* in the *Gītā*, the expressions used have an Upaniṣadic tinge and suggest that He is *Brahman*[195] He is identical with Viṣṇu[196] and is Hari.[197] He is the best among souls, Puruṣottama,[198] an appellation that could apply only to *Brahman* He is identical with Vāsudeva[199] The word, '*Nārāyaṇa*', does not occur, nor is Kṛṣṇa identified with Bhagavān, though the speeches of Kṛṣṇa are introduced by the words, "*Śrī Bhagavānuvāca*"

Viṣṇu is identified in the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* with *Brahman*,[200] Hari,[201] Bhagavān[202] and Vāsudeva[203] The *Bhāgavata*

188. *Ibid* *Bhīṣma* LXV 64 56
189 *Ibid* *Bhīṣma* 50
190 *Ibid* *Bhīṣma* 63
191 *Ibid* *Bhīṣma* 67
192 *Ibid* *Āśvamedhika*, LV 3 6
193 *Ibid* *Śānti* XLIV 17
194 *Ibid* *Vana*, CXXII 4, 5.
195 *Bh G* IV 13, 24, 25 · V 26
196 *Ibid* XI 21
197 *Ibid* XI 9
198 *Ibid*. VIII 1, X 15
199 *Ibid* X. 37.
200. *VP* I, 22 61-63,
201 *Ibid* I 22 63
202, *Ibid*. VI. 5. 69 , 79.
203. *Ibid*. VI 5, 75, 80, 83.

identifies Krsna with Bhagavān,[204] Nārāyaṇa,[205] Hari[206] and Viṣṇu[207] Nārāyaṇa is identified with Visnu[208] in the *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* (c 500 B C)

The principal role assigned to Viṣṇu in ancient texts like the *Vedas*, is one of helping suffering humanity He is a protector of people[209] in general, of the embryos[210] and of conception[211] in particular, this marks His effort as mainly intended to save beings and objects that have come into existence Welfare of the people thus attracts His attention,[212] for which alone He descends down to earth taking up a form of utmost purity unsullied by the defects of *Prakṛti*[213] His divine descents are many, and the gods too cannot visualiz Him except in these forms.[214] All gods are under His control, and so He is the greatest among them Yet He gets associated with Indra to help him in his undertakings[215] There is nothing which is not pervaded by Him and it can be said that He is everything The universe is His body[216]

204 *Bh* XII 12 3

205 *Ibid* X 14 14, XII 12 3

206. *Ibid* XII 12 3

207 *Ibid* X 1 65, X 45 44

208 *Baudhayana Dharma sutra*, II 5 24

209 *Ś Br* I 2 5, XIV 1 15

210 *RV* VII 36 9

211 *Ibid* VII 36 9, X 41 91

212 *Ibid* VII 100 4

213 *Varāha Purana* LXXV 44, 45,

214. Vide

भवतो यत्परं तत्त्वं तन्न जानाति कश्चन ।
अवतारेषु यद्रूपं तदर्चन्ति दिवौकसः ॥

VP. I 4.17.

215 *RV*. I 154 6, VI 69

216 *Ibid*. I, 154. 6, IV. 18. 11, VI. 69, VI. 120. 26.

He took three strides[217] for the well-being of the world and provided those who were attached to Him with accomodation in distant lands like Uru and Ksiti[218] (that appear to be located in Mesapotamia) This act, along with rescuing the world from a cosmic deluge, has won unique fame for His descents as Varāha[219] and Vāmana [220]

He is ever associated with Śrī, though the Vedic hymns as such do not have a reference to this association.[221] This association continues even during divine descents.[222]

He Himself creates the world [223] and, pervading it as its inner controller,[224] protects it from insecurity The sacred rites are identified with Him who is also the only receiver of the offerings made there [225]

The *arcā* form of worship, which seems to be not known in the *Vedas*, became known in the epics [226] and, more so, in the *Purānas*[227] and particularly, the *Viṣnu* and the *Bhāgavata*

217 *RV* I 154 1 5

218 *Ibid* VII 100 4

219 *Ibid* I 61 7, II 7 1, V 77 10 *TS* II 1 3 1, *Bh*, I 3 7

220 *RV* I 154 Vāmana should be considered along with Trivikrama *Bh* I 3 19

221 The *Śrīsūkta* which forms part of the *Ṛgveda Khila* glorifies Śrī '*Khila*' is explained as follows

खिलं नाम कर्मोपासनाज्ञानरूपेषु त्रिष्वपि काण्डेषु यद्यद्रक्तव्यं मन्त्र-
भागमवशिष्यते तस्य सर्वस्यैकतोऽभिध्यानेन प्रकीर्णरूपत्व खिलत्वं ॥

Unmattānanda on *Śrī Sūkta* *Charudeva Śāstri Felicitation Volume.* (p 572)

222 *VP* I 9 142-146,

223. *Ibid* I 1 31

224 *Br U* III 7 3-23

522. *Ś Br* I 4 1 3 *cf Bh G* V 29

226 See under *fn.* 116

227 *VP* VI 8. 86; *Bh.* XI. 3, 49, 27. 12.

among them, recommend strongly the path of devotion[228] in preference to those of *jñāna* and *karma*. *Karma*, itself, becomes something different from what it is in the Vedic texts The act of worship,[229] rendering service to the Lord[230] and His men[231] and offering whatever one has[232] and also the acts of devotion, together with the results expected of them,[233] at the feet of the Lord, have been made part of *karma* *Stotras* composed in languages like Prākrt[234] are allowed to be used, a feature proclaiming the democratic approach of Vaiṣṇavism. The Lord is pleased with any kind of offering, however insignificant it may[235] be, and He proclaims that His devotee will never perish[236]

The temples in which the worship of the Lord in *arcā* is conducted are mostly situated in South India Each ancient temple of Viṣnu has its greatness (*sthalamāhātmya*) recorded in the *Purāṇas*[237] Hoary antiquity is claimed for most of them

228 *VP* III 14 20, *Bh* XI 11 25

229 Vide

दैवं देवार्चनारूपं यज्ञं ।

Ramanuja's *Bhagavadgītabhāṣya*, IV, 25

वर्णाश्रमोचितपरमपुरुषाराधनवेषनित्यनैमित्तिककर्मोपसंहृति-निषिद्धपरिहारनिष्ठस्य ।

Vedarthasamgraha, p, 23

230 *Bh* III 29 11 19, XI, 29

231 *Mbh Aśvamedhika*, XVI 23, *Jitante Stotra*, I 15

232 *Bh* X 81 2-4

233 *Ibid* VII 6 26 XI 3 28 *VP* III 8, 6 19

234 *Ibid* XI 27 45 See *Bh G* IX 32 for a democratic approach

235 *Bh G* IX 26,

236 *Ibid* VI 40, IX 31

237 The *Saura Purāna* refers to temples of Śiva. Veṅkaṭādri is referred to in the *Vāmana*, *Skānḍa*, *Mārkaṇḍeya*, *Varāha*, *Brāhma* and *Pādma Purāṇas* The *Brahmāṇḍa* refers to Ahobila and Kāñcī

Whether this can be upheld or not, it is not irrational to recognize the contribution made by such accounts in the *Purānas*

A reference to some of these shrines is found in Tamil classical texts such as *Silappadikāram*,[238] and *Paripādal*[239] and others Other such works include *Akanānūru*,[240] *Puranānūru*,[241] and *Kalittokai*[242] They describe Visnu graphically, depicting Him to be the foremost, and contain allusions to the divine descent[243] of the Lord

The above-mentioned aspects of Vaisnavism are dealt with in the *Vaisnava Agamas* There could have been mutual indebtedness between them and the epics and *Purānas* which are found to make use of certain doctrines forming the fundamental principles treated in the *Agamas* In the long history of the development of Hindu culture which is of an all-embracing character, the various branches of knowledge could not have risen in isolation nor undergone development and flourished without influencing one another

The *Vaisnava Āgamas* reveal certain peculiar traits Firstly, the Supreme Reality is Visnu with Śrī and they are inseparably associated with each other[244] Secondly, other deities are held to form part of the retinue of Visnu Thirdiy, the *arcā* form of worship gets detailed treatment which includes the

238 Tiruvarangam, I. 10 156, Tirumalai, *ibid* I 6 1-30, both, *ibid.* II 11 35, 51

239 Tirumāliruñcolai, *ibid* XV 11. 1, 14

240 Shrines of Krsna and Balarāma, 59, 175

241 Shrines of Krsna and Balarāma, 56, 58

242 Shrines of Krsna and Balarāma, 26, 105.

243, *Silappadikāram*, XVII

244 *LT.* II. 15, XVI. 31 · *Ahs* XLVIII. 229.

erection of temples and conducting private and public festivals. Lastly, they enjoin the worship of God in the household [245]

The *Vaisnava Āgamas* are of two kinds, namely, *Pāñcarātra* and *Vaikhānasa* The former is more liberal in its outlook and practice than the latter *Tāntrika* practices have exerted a very deep influence on the *Pāñcarātra*, while the *Vaikhānasa* is free from it. Naturally, *tāntrika mantras* have no role to play in the *Vaikhānasa Agama*

The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* perhaps arose earlier than the *Pāñcarātra* on account of its pure Vedic links The following passage indicates this conclusion

वैखानसं श्रीशास्त्रं प्राहुरेकायनाभिधम् ।
शास्त्रेणैकायनाख्येनार्चितेऽत्र हरौ पुरा ॥
सर्वे श्रीहरिसान्निध्यं गता वै जीवकोटयः ।
न स्वर्गो नापि नरको न जन्ममरणे तथा ॥
श्रीशास्त्रस्यैव रक्षार्थं पूजनार्थं तथापदि ।
पाञ्चरात्रं पुनर्प्राह शास्त्रं वैष्णवमुत्तमम् ॥

S.A. LXV 117-119

It is said that *Vaikhānasa* is *Śrīśāstra* (or a holy *śāstra*) called 'Ekāyana'. When Hari was worshipped in olden times in accordance with the system called *Vaikhānasa,* all the groups (or crores) of living beings attained the presence of Hari There was (then) no paradise nor hell, and no birth and death The Lord uttered the best *Vaiṣnava* system, *Pāñcarātra*, to safeguard the holy system and also for (preserving the mode of) worship during danger.

245 *Paus* 32, *Pās.* III 32, *SA* 81, *KA.* 15

Vide

प्रतिमां विग्रहं शश्वत्सर्वेषां श्रेयसे तु वै ।

Paus XXXVI – 414 a

Here the word, '*Śrīśāstra*', may be taken to mean 'a holy system' or 'a system in which Śrī is dealt with'. In the former, case, 'Śrī' is only an honorific and in the latter, it indicates that the system is intended to glorify Śrī The word, '*ekāyana*', means the only one or unique path for salvation. This is the *Ekāyana* system mentioned in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*[246] as a subject of study among others This is said to be the name of a recension of the *Veda* which is now lost The following passage is said to convey what this recension stood for.

तमेव विद्वानमृत इह भवति ।
नान्यः पन्था अयनाय विद्यते ॥
T A. III 12 7

According to this passage, a person becomes immortal here by knowing Him to be thus, that is, as depicted above in the *Purusasūkta* The word '*veda*' is to be taken in the sense of worship (*upāsana*)[247] As it is said here that there is no other way available to get *mokṣa*, this method, namely, the worship of Visnu called 'Purusa', is to be adopted

In the passage cited above from the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*, it is evident that worship of the Lord takes the worshipper to Him. It is not, however, stated there that all the selves had obtained *moksa*, but only that they had gone near Hari (*Śrīharisānnidhya*). This means that they, if they had not really obtained *moksa*, or other selves who were still waiting to be sent to the mortal world to have the experiences of the results of their past deeds, would be coming down to earth By then, the *Śrīśāstra* might be lost, and so the *Pāñcarātra* was brought into being The latter is declared to be the best Vaisnava system and intended to

246 *Chu* VII 1 2, 4, VII. 2 1

247 Vide
वेदनमुपासनं स्यात्तद्विषये श्रवणात् ।
(Vākyakāra's passage cited in the *Śrībhāṣya*, p. 53.)

safeguard the *Vaikhānasa* system. The word '*prāha*' must indicate that *Pāñcarātra* was uttered by Hari

The word, '*ekāyana*', in the passage cited above, presents a difficulty The *Pāñcarātra* and not the *Vaikhānasa* is believed to be based on the *Ekāyana* which is also called *Rahasyāmnāya* [248] The references to this in many texts[249] are not easy to reconcile with the sense of the passage cited above from the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* However, this statement is a good piece of evidence for the *Pāñcarātra* being closely allied to it.

There is again a reference[250] in the *Pāñcaratra* tradition to the offering of the effigy of a beast made of flour (*piṣṭapaśu*) in the sacrifice where an animal is to be slain and offered. A similar rite, with the name, *Viṣnuyāga*,[251] is referred to in the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*, It is not clear whether it originally formed part of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition or was adopted mainly on grounds of kindness to animals Anyway, this sacrifice lends support to believing that both *Āgamas* have the same tradition, though the ritual is enjoined as a means of expiation in the *Vaikhānasa*

There is also another way of explaining the above passage. The *Ekāyana* recension must have been the basic foundation for the development of the concept of absolute devotion (*paramai-kāntitva*) The *Vaikhānasa* must have developed out of this recension and, in this respect, has to be regarded as akin to the *Pāñcarātra* The latter had a specific development with provision made for the *yantras* and *tāntrika mantras* which are absent in the former. The two do not have much divergence in the main concepts of Vaisṇavism An *Upaniṣad* called *Sitopaniṣad* alludes

248 *SS* I. 16

249 Vide :—IS XX 289, IS. I 18, 19, 40.

250 *Mbh Śānti*. CCCLV.

251. *JK*, 99.

to Vaikhānasa (and not Vikhanasa), a sage who is an exponent of such important doctrines as those relating to the three powers, *icchā*, *jnāna* and *kriyā*, and others, which are treated only in the *Pāñcarātra* system This work, though perhaps relatively late, seeks to show the sage Vikhanas as associated with the *Pāñcarātra* system[252] An approach on the basis of this reference may justify the passage in the *Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa*[253] Yet the frequent references to the *Pāñcarātra* as based on the *Ekāyana* recension,[254] cannot be easily explained away

The following verses from the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* lend support to the concept of absolute devotion of the *Vaikhānasa*[255]

विप्र वैखानसाख्या ये ते भक्तास्तत्त्वमुच्यते ।
एकान्तिनस्तु सत्त्वस्था देहान्तं नान्ययाजिनः ।

कर्तव्यमिति देवेशं संयजन्ते फलं विना ।
प्राप्नुवन्ति च देहान्ते वासुदेवत्वमब्जज ॥

Paus XXXVI 260b–262a.

That the *Vaikhānasas* do not worship any other deity and worship Viṣṇu out of a sense of duty and without expecting any results, makes it clear that they must be following the *Ekāyana* recension.

The *Bhāgavata* contains a reference to Vikhanas having prayed to the Lord for descending down to the earth and to the descent of the Lord in the family of the *Sāttvatas*.

252 Vide —*Sītopaniṣad* Translation by Alain Danielou, *Brahmavidyā* XIX, parts 1-4, pp 321-327

253 *SA*. LXV 117-119

254 Same as 249

255. *Paus* reads '*ekāyanākhyā*' instead of '*vaikhānasākhyā*'. It is not clear whether this citation as noted in *SA*. Introduction, p. xxii, is really taken from an authentic text of *Paus*.

Vide:

विखनसार्थितो विश्वगुप्तये सख उदेयिवान् सात्वतां कुले ।

X 31 4b

The word, '*Vikhanas*', must be taken to mean Brahmā who made a request to the Lord for the divine descent on earth [256] Vallabhācārya, the founder of the *Śuddhādvaita* system of *Vedānta*, takes this word to mean Vikhanas, the sage and founder of the *Vaikhānasa* system [257] This interpretation would support the sense of the passage cited above in the *Samūrtārcanādhikarana* Then the *Pāñcarātra* system must be admitted to have sprung long after the *Vaikhānasa* Yet the problem remains unsolved Brahmā is mentioned in the *Visnupurāna* and *Bhāgavata*[258] as having approached the Lord and made a request to Him to descend on earth The word '*Vikhanas*' means Brahmā besides the sage with that name The expression, '*viśvaguptaye*', means "for protecting the universe" This protection, as far as the descent of Krsna is concerned, was desired by the gods to be effected through lightening the burden on earth The *Pāñcarātra* doctrines receive exposition through the Lord, but the main purpose served by His descent is fulfilled only through the removal of the evil forces, and so this achievement, which is in consonance with the request made of Him by Brahmā, should be considered as of primary significance In fact, all the divine descents of the Lord have served this main purpose It is not therefore appropriate to take the passage as being in favour of bringing the sage Vikhanas into the picture. Ingenuity, however, plays the chief role in these interpretations the context, however, does not support them

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256. *VP* V 1 54-58, *Bh* X 1, 20 The interpretation of the word '*Vikhanas*' as meaning the sage Vikhanas and found in the Introduction, p XVIII, of *SA*, is wrong

257. Vallabha on *Bh* X. 31 4b

258. *VP*, V. 1, 14, 28, *Bh*, X, 31, 4b.

CHAPTER IV

VAIKHĀNASA ĀGAMA

The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* describes the method of worshipping Viṣṇu and prescribes the way of life for those who adopt the *Vaikhānasa-sūtra*. This is based upon the Vedic sources and derives support, for the doctrines which it preaches, solely from Vedic texts The worship of Visnu in the *arcā* form is stressed

The word, '*Vaikhānasa*', is very old, occurring in the early literature of Sanskrit It signifies the *vānaprasthāśrama* which a student who had completed the study of the *Vedas* could take up even without getting married [259] The sage, Saubhari, who entered into the householder's life to be happy with a family, though he used to practise meditation, renounced it and entered into the *vānaprastha* order and followed the way of life prescribed in the *Vaikhānasa* mode and became a recluse [260] Here the word, '*vaikhānasa*', is used in the sense of duties to be

259 Vide *VP* III 10 15

260 Vide

तत्राप्यनुदिनं वैखानसनिष्पाद्यमशेषक्रियाकलापं निष्पाद्य क्षपितसकलपापः परिपक्वमनोवृत्तिरात्मन्यग्नीन् समारोप्य भिक्षुरभवत् ।

Ibid IV 2 130

Here the word '*vaikhānasa*' is only the name of a class of hermits Cf *Bh.* III. 12 43. Pṛthu took to this way of life and practised penance as approved by the hermits (*vaikhānasas*). *Ibid*. IV. 23. 4.

performed by a *vānaprastha* (who is referred to by the word '*vaikhānasa*'). Kālidāsa refers to this order of life in the *Abhijñānaśākuntala* 261 The commentator, Śrīnivāsācārya (Vaikhānasa) refers to the *Vaikhānasavrata* mentioned here as a hard observance of those who practise penance 262 Here, it must be taken to mean an act of penance and austerity (*śrāmaṇakadharma*). Anyway, the word, '*vaikhānasa*', in the above contexts, does not appear to stand for the follower of the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*

The word has been explained as 'belonging to or following Vikhanas, a sage who "dug" within himself and meditated upon God'

Vide

खनित्वा चात्मनात्मानं धर्मादिगुणसंयुतम् ।
ध्यानमाविश्य योगेन ह्यासीद्विखनसो विभुः ॥

S A Introduction P XIX

261. Vide

वैखानसं किमनया व्रतमाप्रदानाद्व्यापाररोधि मदनस्य निषेवितव्यम् ।
अत्यन्तमेव मदिरेक्षणवल्लभाभिराहो निवत्स्यति समं हरिणाङ्गनाभिः ॥

That some women remained unmarried and spent their life as hermits is indicated here

262, Vide

वैखानसव्रतः तपस्विनां दुष्करो व्रतविशेषः
मूलैरेके फलैरेके पुष्पैरेके दृढव्रताः ।
वर्तयन्ति यथान्यायं वैखानसमताश्रिताः ।

Śrīnivāsācārya's com. *ibid*

Cf.

पुष्पमूलफलैर्वापि केवलैर्वर्तयेत्सदा ।
कालपक्वैः स्वयं शीर्णैर्वैखानसमते स्थिताः ॥

MS VII. 12.

Here the root '*khan*' means to dig, to go deep into, and is to be taken to lay bare what lies hidden (*gūḍhārthaprakāśana*). He moved among the birds

Vide

खननं तत्र मीमांसा ह्यासिद्धः परतः परात् ।
विशेषेण खनेद्यस्मात् भावनान्मुनिसृष्टये ॥
नाम्ना विखनसो लोके स आसीदण्डजप्रियः ॥

Ibid.

The name of the sage occurs as 'Vikhanāḥ' 'Vikhanas', and 'Vaikhānasa.' He is considered to be Brahmā in his divine descent.[263]

Three passages from the *Vedas* are cited to support the achievement of the sage Vikhanas, as an exponent of the Viṣṇu cult —

1 प्रवः पान्तमन्धसो धियायते ।
महे शूराय विष्णवे चार्चत ॥

RV I. 155 1.

"Acquire the food of Soma which belongs to you Offer worship to the great warrior and to Viṣṇu who desire to receive praises from you" The great warrior is Indra[264] In his *Vimānārcanakalpa*,[265] Marici cites this and remarks :

तस्माद्विष्णवर्चनमेव द्विजैरहरहः कर्तव्यमिति विज्ञायते ।

This means that only Viṣṇu is to be offered worship every day.

2 वैखानसं पूर्वं इह साम भवति ।
ऊहे दशरात्रे सप्तमेऽह्नि ।[266]

263 Vide विखनाश्च विरिञ्चनः । *Vaiyāsika Nighaṇṭu*

264 *RV* I 155, VI 69, VII 99.

965 *VK* p, 503.

266. Introduction to *VK*. p, 2

"There is here an old *Sāman* with the name Vaikhānasa. This is to be used on the seventh day of the ten-day sacrifice." The *Rgvedic* hymn,

नकिष्टं कर्मणा नशात् । 267

had its first half set to the *Sāma* mode of chanting by Vaikhānasa and the latter half by Puruhanman 268 The word, 'Vaikhānasa', may mean 'by Vikhanas' or 'a pupil or follower of Vikhanas'

3.

पवस्वन्तं वैखानसा पवस्वते । 269

"The Vaikhānasas purify the already pure person" The pure person is Viṣṇu To purify Him, one has to offer worship to Him. His worship is enjoined here This is referred to in the *Bṛhaddevatā* (II 29):

पुनाति यदिदं विश्वमेवाग्निः पार्थिवोऽथ च ।
वैखानसर्षिभिस्तेन पवमान इति स्तुतः ॥

The passages cited above convey that Vikhanas was an ancient sage who was a devout worship of Viṣṇu. He belonged to the *Aukheya* division of the *Taittirīya* recension of the *Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda* 270 He was quite familiar with the *Sāma* chants, as

267 *RV* VIII 70 3 The meaning is No one can kill him who worships Indra

268 Vide Bhaskara's *Bhāsya* on *Sāmavedārṣeyapradīpa*, III 2. 1.

269

पवस्वन्त वैखानसः पवस्वत्यादिशतर्चः वैखानसाधिदेवताः ।

V K Introduction p 2.

There are several *ṛks* in *RV* 9 all addressed to Soma and not to Vaikhānasa The passage cited is perhaps lost The support, however, in favour of Vaikhānasa, is available from the *Bṛhaddevatā* cited below

270. *Caranavyūhe*, p 28

evidenced above The exponents of the *Vaikhānasa* systems declare that they follow the *Vaikhānasa* recension.

Vide :

वेदानां व्यसनादर्वाक् प्राग्रूपं मिलितं तु यत् ।
तां तु वैखानसीं शाखामिति ब्रह्मविदा विदुः ॥

S A. Introduction P. XIX

This is not correct. Perhaps the name, 'Aukheya,' came to be forgotten when that recension came to be called after Vikhanas who become a celebrated figure through his contribution to Vedic rituals This is evident from the following passage :–

येन वेदार्थं विज्ञाय लोकानुग्रहकाम्यया ।
प्रणीतं सूत्रमौखेयं तस्मै विखनसे नमः ॥

Commentary on the *Vaikhānasa-śrautasūtra.*

The followers of Vikhanas are stated to be dear to Indra[271] and regarded as the seers of *mantras* [272] They are acceptable for guidance not only for the hermits in their conduct, but also for worshipping Visnu [273]

271 *Tāndya Brāhmana*, XIV 5 7

272 Vide .

वैखानसाः केचन शतसङ्ख्याका मन्त्रद्रष्टाः ।

Sāmavidhāna Brāhmana, I. 17.

273 Vide

वेदे वैखानसे सूत्रे यो धर्मः परिकीर्तितः ।
सर्वैस्स धर्मोऽनुष्ठेयो नात्र कार्या विचारणा ॥

वानप्रस्थास्ततस्सर्वे ये द्विजाऽन्ये च सूत्रिणः ।
तत्सूत्रविध्यनुष्ठानात्स्मृता वैखानसास्तु ते ॥

यत्सूत्राद्यन्तमध्येषु भगवान्विष्णुरव्ययः ।
यष्टव्यो गीयते यस्मात् सर्वसूत्रोत्तमं तु तत् ॥

V. K. Introduction, p. 4.

Vikhanas himself is the author of *Dharma*, *Gṛhya* and *Śrauta Sūtras* which he claimed to have compiled under guidance and instruction from Viṣṇu [274] He is identified with Brahmā who is credited with the authorship of the *Sūtras*.[275] Besides the ceremonial aspect, these *Kalpasūtras* enjoin the worship of Viṣṇu [276] The directions given here for the worship are stated to be in consonance with the contents of the *Vedas*.[277]

The *Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa*,[278] *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa*,[279] *Ārṣeya Brāhmaṇa* [280] and *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* [281] mention the name, Vaikhānasa, for reference The *Dharmasūtras* of Baudhāyana,[282] the *Gṛhyasūtras* of Agniveśa [283] and Baudhāyana [284] and the *Śrautasūtras* of Baudhāyana [285] and Hiraṇyakeśin [286]

274

आदिकाले तु भगवान् ब्रह्मा तु विखना मुनिः ।
यजुः शाखानुसारेण चक्रे सूत्रं महत्तरम् ।
वर्णाश्रमाचारयुतं श्रौतस्मार्तसमन्वितम ।

Ibid pp 3, 4

275 Vide

ब्रह्मा तु विखना मुनिः ।

Ibid. p 3.

276 See under 273

277. Vide

सर्ववैदिकाचारास्तपो यज्ञश्च विष्णुपूजाविधेर्भेदाः ।

VK p 480.

278 *Tāndya Brāhmana*, XIV, 9 29

279 *Jaiminīyabrāhmana*, I. 9 3

280 *Arṣeyabrāhmana*, I 62

281 *TA* XXIII, 3

282 *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*, II 6 16

283, *Agniveśa Gṛhyasūtra*, II 6. 5.

284 Baudhāyana *Gṛhyasūtra*, II 9 17

285. Baudhāyana *Śrautasūtra*, XVI 24 8

286, *Hiranyakeśi Śrautasūtra*, XIX, 3. 14.

cite Vikhanas as authority for their ritualistic practice in certain contexts.

Vikhanas had nine pupils according to the following *śloka* of Bhṛgu.[287]

काश्यपोऽत्रिर्मरीचिश्च वसिष्ठोऽङ्गिरसोभृगुः ॥
पुलस्त्यः पुलहश्चैव क्रतुश्च नवसंख्यकाः ।
एते विखनसः शिष्याः लोकानुग्रहकारिणः ॥

Among these Kāśyapa, Atri, Marici and Bhṛgu are known to have composed their own *Āgama* texts. The works of others have not come down to us Whether they wrote at all is also not known Another point to be noted here is that there is no independent *Samhitā* with the authorship of Vikhanas. Perhaps, Vikhanas taught in general the conduct of man and his mode of life in regard to *dharma*, *gṛhya* and *śrauta* aspects and laid stress on the need to attend to the duties concerning these with implicit faith in Viṣṇu He could have directed his pupils to write only on the practical aspects of Vaiṣṇavism in the light of his own teachings They too must have undertaken their work accordingly Hence, the *Vaikhānasa Āgamas* do not treat exhaustively the *Caryāpāda* which is dealt with in the *Vaikhānasa Kalpasūtras* by Vikhanas himself.

The validity of the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* is questioned in some quarters The objection here is based on two grounds. The first raises the question of the validity of the *Vaikhānasa Kalpasūtras* These *sūtras*, it is urged, cannot be valid nor their author

287. Vide

ततो भगवताक्षसः सृष्ट्वा तावन्नवसंख्यकानध्यापयामास
तथा साङ्गोपाङ्गानि सर्वशः ॥

VK. Introduction, p. 5

Then the verses cited above, naming the disciples of Vikhanas, follow.

acceptable, because they are not adopted by any one outside this group. The second criticism is based on the vocation of those who adopt them. The priest who attends to the worship of the idol according to the *Vaikhānasa-sūtras*, must be considered to live upon the earnings through this The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* has not prescribed any vocation other than attending to the worship of the Deity for those who follow these *sūtras*. Such priests are called *devalakas*[288] and, along with others whose practices are similar, they have received severe condemnation. They are stigmatised as not being Brahmins They are compared to *Candālas*

Vide,

देवकोशोपजीवी यस्स देवलक उच्यते ।
वृत्त्यर्थं पूजयेद्देवं त्रीणि वर्षाणि यो द्विजः ।
स वै देवलको नाम सर्वकर्मसु गर्हितः ॥

(cited in the *Āgamaprāmānya*, p 8)

अवालुकाः देवलकाः कल्पदेवलकाः गणभोगदेवलका
भागवतवृत्तिरिति चतुर्थः । एते उपब्राह्मणा इति ॥

cited *Ibid* pp. 8-9.

आह्वायका देवलका नक्षत्रग्रामयाजकाः ।
एते ब्राह्मणचण्डाला महापथिकपञ्चमाः ॥

Mbh Śānti XXVIII 74

These objection cannot stand The *Vaikhānasa Kalpasūtras* are valid like the other *kalpasūtras*, such as those of Āśvalāyana, Āpastamba and others They are valid, as they do not go against the *Vedas* and they make use of only the *mantras* of the

288 The word '*devalaka*' is thus derived, देवं देवस्वं लाति । one who takes away what belongs to God Identity of the kinds of 'devalakas' cited by Yāmuna and in *Mbh Śānti*, XXVIII 74 is hard to be arrived at See *Āgamaprāmāṇya*, notes by Van Buitenen, p 125 under 34, 35 Cf *Smṛticandrikā*, II p. 396 where Devala's view is cited about the 'devalaka' as a despicable person: also see Aparārka, pp. 460, 923

Vedas for any rite whatsoever. That they do not adopt any other *kalpasūtras* is not merely a meaningless contention, but also speaks highly of their original and superior position among *kalpasūtras* The *sūtras* of Āpastamba, Gautama, Yama, Manu, Śaṃkha, Likhita, Hārīta, Vasiṣṭha and others adopt the *sūtras* of Vikhanas for the reception and preservation of the sacred fire (*kuṇḍa*), while performing *Pauṇḍrika* and other sacrifices[289] Viṣṇu alone is to be worshipped according to these *sūtras*, which therefore should be considered as *sāttvika* They prescribe their rules in accordance with the duties of castes and orders in life The *Vaikhānasa Āgamas* must not therefore be denied validity, merely because they deal with matters according to the *Vaikhānasa Kalpasūtras*

Those who have been adopting these *sūtras* to guide their religious practices, have been studying the *Vedas* through the generations and gone through all the secular and religious purificatory rites (*saṃskāra*) enjoined therein. They have been following the rules prescribed for castes and orders in life. They are diligent in doing the duties prescribed for them. They are Brahmins devoted only to God Therefore, they are not inferior to any other group of the Hindu community

Those who follow the *Vaikhānasa Agama* the texts of which are composed by Kāśyapa, Atri and others, are required, by virtue of following the *Vaikhānasa Kalpasūtra*, to perform worship to God in *arcā* form This work is not prompted by the need to earn their living On the other hand, they would become degraded, if they do not discharge this duty. So the definition of '*devalaka*' does not apply to them.

289 *Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra*, II 6 16, III. 3 14, 17, refers to the views of Vaikhānasa Govindasvāmin on *ibid*. mentions the Vaikhānasas, Vide.—on III. 3. 21. 23, Haradatta on *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*, II. 8. 11. 20, *Gautama*, III. 21.

Kāśyapa, Atri and other authors of the *Vaikhanāsa* texts are as authoritative as Manu, Nārada and others whose *Smritis* are wholly valid. That these are not included within the well known subjects of learning[290] (*vidyāsthāna*) is no argument, since their number (fourteen) only implies that some more could be added to this list. All that enlightened and good people believe in could not be traced to this list, and something not found there could not on that account alone be condemned.[291]

Other *Dharmaśāstra* texts do not expatiate on the celebration of festivals, but the *Vaikhānasa Āgamas* have an elaborate treatment of them. This is no reason to declare the latter's invalidity Like some *Dharmaśāstra* texts,[292] the *Vaikhānasa Sūtras* recognize the worship of God. Both just indicate the mode of worship On this is based the detailed treatment of this subject in the *Vaikhānasa Āgamas* The elaboration is not

290 Vide

पुराणन्यायमीमांसाधर्मशास्त्राङ्गमिश्रिताः ।
वेदाः स्थानानि विद्यानां धर्मस्य च चतुर्दश ॥

Yājñavalkyasmṛti, I, 3

Eighteen of them are thus enumerated :—

अङ्गानि वेदाश्चत्वारो मीमांसान्यायविस्तर. ।
पुराणं धर्मशास्त्रं च विद्याह्येताश्चतुर्दश ॥
आयुर्वेदो धनुर्वेदो गान्धर्वश्चैव ते त्रयः ।
अर्थशास्त्रं चतुर्थं तु विद्याह्यष्टादशैव ततः ॥

VP III 6, 28, 29

291 It will not be inappropriate to treat the epics (*itihāsa*) like the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* as forming part of a separate *vidyāsthana*

292. *Agniveśagṛhyasūtra*, pp 71-73

Cf. आदित्यमथवा विष्णुमीशं ब्रह्माणमेव च ।
अर्चयेद्वैदिकैर्मन्त्रैर्गृहस्थः प्रयतो भवेत् ॥

Smṛitimuktāphala, *Āhnikakaṇḍa*, II. p. [illegible]

therefore lacking in authority and the *Āgamas* do not cease to be valid because of this

Finally, it must be said that the *Mahābhārata* mentions both the *Vaikhānasa* and the *Pāñcarātra* as equally valid.

Vide .

विष्णुं च पुरुषं च नित्यमच्युतं च युधिष्ठिर ।
अनिरुद्धं च मां प्राहुर्वैखानसविदो जनाः ॥
अन्येत्वेव विजानन्ति मां राजन् पाञ्चरात्रिकाः ॥

Mbh Āśvamedhika—CIV 87

The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* is ancient, as it is mostly free from the influence of the *tāntrika* practices. The *Vaisnavadharma-parvan*[293] in the *Āśvamedhika-parvan* of the *Mahābhārata*, where this is mentioned, is not admitted by modern scholars to be earlier to the nuclear portion of the epic Anyway, the cult of *Vaikhanasa* must be as old as *Pāñcarātra* The account of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine is put into the mouth of Bhīṣma whose discourses are contained in the *Śāntiparvan* of the epic.[294] Bhīṣma died before the beginning of Kaliyuga (3101 B.C), and so the doctrines of the *Vaikhānasa* and *Pāñcarātra* are as old as the date of the epic which is fixed about 3000 B.C. when it was narrated to Janamejaya by Vyāsa's pupil, Vaiśampāyana

That this *Agama* was also known as '*Bhāgavata*' is evident from the references which the commentators[295] on the *Kalpa-*

293 *Mbh Aśvamedha*, CIV 84-89

294 *Mbh Santi*, CCCXLII-CCCLX

295 *VK* Introduction p 3 It is however inappropriate to take, as the editor has done in this Introduction, the word '*Bhāgavata*' occurring in the *Āgamaprāmānya* (p 1) in the sense of Vikhanas It is of interest to note that he who takes to the worship of Viṣṇu was known as '*Bhāgavata*'. Vide —*Bṛhatsamhitā* CX 19 The name also denotes according to Atri (384) any one who is unfit for any work and so takes to the worship of a deity (including Śiva and others) Vide —

वेदैर्विहीनाश्च पठन्ति शास्त्रं शास्त्रेण हीनाश्च पुराणपाठाः ।
पुराणहीनाः कृषिणो भवन्ति भ्रष्टास्ततो भागवता भवन्ति ॥

sutras make, identifying the *sutras* of the *Bhāgavatas* as those composed by Vikhanas.

Bāṇa, describing Divākaramitra, the Buddhist monk, in the *Harṣacarita*, says :

अथ तेषां तरूणां मध्ये नानादेशीयः .. विटपच्छायासु निषण्णै-स्तरुमूलानि निषेवमाणैः ... भागवतै वर्णिभिः ... औपनिषदैरैश्वर-कारणिकैः पौराणिकैः .. पाञ्चरात्रिकैरन्यैश्च ... स्वान् स्वान् सिद्धान्तान् शृण्वद्भिश्च उत्पादयद्भिश्च ... शिष्यतां प्रतिपन्नै दूरादेव वेद्यमानं दिवाकरमित्रमद्राक्षीत् ।

Harṣacarita–N S Press, Bombay, pp 238–239.

It is here said that the Buddhist monk was attended by a number of people who became his disciples. They were the followers of various systems of faith and thought Here the words, '*bhāgavata*,' '*aupaniṣada*,' '*aiśvarakāraṇika*', '*paurāṇika*' and '*pāñcarātrika*' occur to mean respectively the devotees of Viṣṇu, followers of the *Upanisads*, the *Naiyāyikas*, preachers of the *Purāṇas* and the followers of the *Pāñcarātra* system. Those who followed the *Upaniṣads*, *Nyāya* system and *Purāṇas* could be taken to have faith in Viṣṇu and other deities as well The devotees of Viṣṇu and the followers of the *Pāñcarātra* system are exclusively attached to Viṣṇu. The word '*Bhagavān*' denotes primarily Viṣṇu[298] and no other deity, and the words '*Pāñcarātrika*' and '*Bhāgavata*' must be taken to mean two groups of

298 Vide

वाचको भगवच्छब्दस्तस्याद्यस्याक्षयात्मनः ।

VP VI. 5 69 b.

एवमेष महाञ्शब्दो मैत्रेय भगवानिति ।
परमब्रह्मभूतस्य वासुदेवस्य नान्यगः ॥
तत्रपूज्यपदार्थोक्ति परिभाषासमन्वितः ।
शब्दोऽयं नोपचारेण त्वन्यत्र ह्युपचारतः ॥

Ibid. VI. 5. 76, 77.

devotees of Viṣṇu. Hence the *Bhāgavatas* must be different from the followers of the *Pāñcarātra*. They should be the worshippers of the Lord described as 'Bhagavān' in the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and *Bhagavadgītā*. Or they may be the *Vaikhānasas*. This identification requires stronger evidence. If it is admitted, the *Vaikhānasa* system may be taken to have been in vogue at the beginning of the 7th century A D

The *Avantisundarī* of Daṇḍin (c. 675 A D.) refers to the worship of the *Vaikhānasa* kind in the following passage:

वृत्ते च विखनसविधानविहिते विधौ स्थानस्थापितेषु
प्रज्वलत्सु प्रदीपेषु ।

This gives the latter half of the seventh century as a period during which the rites according to the system of Vikhanas were being observed [297]

The *Vaikhānasa Āgamas* are mainly concerned with worship of the Lord in a concrete form. To that end are detailed the selection of a site, building of the temple, choosing materials like wood and stone, production of the idols of various kinds, their installation, method of worship, private and public festivals, and expiation for the sins of omission and commission. Apart from Viṣṇu, other deities like Rudra, Śiva, Devī, Vināyaka, Ṣaṇmukha, Sūrya etc., are required to be worshipped.[298] The reason given for the worship of Rudra is interesting :—

अश्वरथनागायुधयोधानां जयवीर्यादयो राजसगुणा रुद्रशक्त्या प्रसिद्धन्ति उग्ररूपत्वाद्रुद्रस्य । अतो नगर्यादिषु हरः पूज्यः ।
JK. XVII.

297 Vide :—*Avantisundarī*, p. 186,

298. *KA*, V, *SA*. V; *VK*. XX,

Many other ways are available for offering worship to God like *Pāñcarātra*, *Yoga* and others. Yet, the *Vaikhānasa* mode is said to be the best and most pleasing to God.[299] In this connection, the following passage is of significance :—

विखनोमुनये पूर्वं विष्णुना समुदीरितम् ।
वैखानसेन मुनिना लोकानुग्रहकारिणा ॥
अस्मभ्यमेतदुक्तं हि विशिष्टाद्वैतपूजनम् ।

SA. XXXI. 58, 59 a.

The expression, '*viśiṣṭādvaita-pūjana*', must be taken to be the way of worshipping God in accordance with the doctrines of the Viśiṣṭādvaita system. The word, '*viśiṣṭādvaita*', came to be used to refer to the system of *Vedānta* expounded by Rāmānuja only during the 13th century.[300] This passage must have been added to the *Atrisaṁhitā* after this period. Yet one cannot miss the desire behind this addition to the text. It is to harmonise the mode of worship taught by Vikhanas with the doctrines of the Viśiṣṭādvaita system.

Regarding the installation of the idols and the need to worship, a question is generally raised. The Lord is everywhere. Why should there be invocation (*āvāhana*) and dismissal (*visarjana*) of the Deity? The answer is given thus in the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*. The Lord is all-pervasive. Invocation means inviting Him through *mantras* and requesting Him to be in one particular place to receive worship. Otherwise, even gods

299 Vide

यद्वेदमन्त्रैः क्रियते तद्वैखानसमीरितम् ।
तस्माद्वैखानसं श्रेष्ठमिति पूर्वजशासनम् ॥

KA XXXVI. 26 b-27 a.

300 Sudarśanasūri was the earliest writer to use the word, in the *Śrutapradīpikā*. Vide *Śrībhāṣya* with ten commentaries, Madras edn. p 958. *Vedārtha-saṅgraha-tātparyadīpikā*, Brindavana edn., p 46. Cf. V. Varadachari. 'Antiquity of the term, 'Viśiṣṭādvaita'. *Brahmavidyā* XXVI. Parts 3-4.

cannot adore Him. While He is invoked, He compresses His expansive form out of kindness for His devotees, just as the peacock does its tail-plumes. Viṣṇu shines in the heart of the devotee who meditates upon Him as the fire in the forest blazes forth in a particular place there.[301] The words of Mārkaṇḍeya, which are cited here, are worth noting:

> अस्माभिश्च हरेस्तस्य माहात्म्यं नावबुध्यते ।
> मन्त्रैरावाहिते देवे स्थूले कूर्चे जलेऽथवा ॥
> भक्तानुकम्पया स्थित्वा पूजां गृह्णाति पूजितः ।
>
> *SA* XXXI. 66, 67 a.

Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality is admitted by all the schools of thought as the means of obtaining freedom from bondage. The Reality must be known as it is, without there being any room for uncertainty or delusion. Such knowledge is called *tattvajñāna*. Reality, which is referred to by the word, '*tattva*', is taken differently by different schools of thought. The Viśiṣṭādvaita school recognizes three *tattvas*, namely, *cit* (sentient) *acit* (insentient) and *Īśvara* (God). The *Vaikhānasa Agama* offers a very direct interpretation. The *Vedas* declare Nārāyaṇa to be the Supreme *Tattva*. So the word '*tat*' must be taken to refer to Viṣṇu. The *Paramātman* is the object of *tattvajñāna*, the individual self is the knower and the *Vedas* represent the knowledge of *tattvajñāna*.

Vide:

तस्य भावस्तत्त्वमिति तस्य परब्रह्मणो नारायणस्य भावः । तत्त्वं नारायणः परः इति श्रुतिः । तदवगमनं ज्ञानं तद्विदः ब्रह्मविदः । तस्मात् परमात्मा ज्ञेयः, जीवात्मा ज्ञाता, श्रुतयो ज्ञानमिति ब्रह्मवादिनो वदन्ति ।

VK, p.492

301. *SA* XXXI 59-65

'*Brahman*', '*Paramātman*', 'Nārāyaṇa' and 'Viṣṇu' are the names by which this reality is referred to It has two aspects, namely, being partless and being possessed of parts [302] The former (*niṣkala*) has full pervasion, both internal and external. As it is very subtle, its nature could not be determined. Hence some *Vedāntins*[303] declare it as both existence and non-existence (*sadasat*) He is the self of all. He is present in the *ākāśa* within the lotus-like heart in the flame of Vaiśvānara fire [304] The *niskala* form is like ghee in milk, oil in sesamum, fragrance in the flower, juice in the fruit, and fire in wood from friction, Ghee, oil and the others mentioned here issue out of things within which they were lying latent When a self meditates upon the *niṣkala* aspect of *Brahman*, there appears forth *Brahman* revealing in full its individual features Devotion, which takes the form of meditation, rubs (or strikes) It, and there arises the *sakala* [305] aspect. The meditator thinks of a particular form of the Deity. When the faggot (*araṇi*) is rubbed, sparks of fire fly forth. Brahmā, Śiva and others who emanate from *Brahman* are different from It like the sparks of fire from fire. The lump of mud

302 *VK.*, p 492

303 *Ibid*

दृश्यादृश्योऽत्यच्छो ऽमलो नित्यो ऽचिन्त्यो ऽप्रमेयो निर्गुणो निश्चलो ... अतीन्द्रियः सुसूक्ष्मत्वादनिर्देश्यः सदसदिति ब्रह्मवादिनो वदन्ति ।

The word, '*brahmavādinah*', denotes those who have realized *Brahman* and therefore expound Its reality The word '*sadasat*' does not refer to the Advaita concept

304 Vide .

तस्याः शिखाया मध्ये परमात्मा व्यवस्थितः ।
स ब्रह्मा स शिवः सेन्द्रः सोऽक्षरः परमस्वराट् ॥

Nārāyana Upaniṣad XIII cited in *VK.* p. 493.

305. *VK*, p. 493. Cf. *Pās* I. 7. 48 b

placed on the potter's wheel, is not distinct from the jar, plate and other things made out of it The meditator can think of such forms which are different from and also identical with *Brahman* Viṣṇu takes the form which is taken to represent the *sakala* aspect, for the purpose of creation, protection and destruction of all beings

Vide :

सर्वव्याप्यशरीरः परमात्मैव सर्वभूतानां प्रभवरक्षण -
संहृतिनिमित्तशरीरी भवति ।

VK. p 493

Śrī, who is eternal and whose form is not manifested, belongs to Him as His power (*śakti*). She is ever in agreement with His will. She is ever in the form of bliss. She is in the form of primordial matter (*mūlaprakṛti*) [306] She is the cause for the Lord taking to any activity.[307] This concept is in agreement with that in the *Tantras*.

The Lord (*Bhagavān*) could be worshipped in four ways, namely, *japa*, *huta*, *arcana* and *dhyāna* [308] *Japa* is to be done, meditating on a *mantra* of Viṣṇu Performance of *agnihotra* and other such rites comes under *huta* (*homa*). The third is offering worship to God in the idol in the temple or house, following the method of the *Vedas*. *Dhyāna* consists of meditation on God through *yoga* Among these, *arcana* is the means to attain all objectives. The Lord becomes fivefold for this purpose with

306 सा च नित्या आद्यन्तरहिता अव्यक्तरूपिणी प्रमाणाप्रमाण-साधारणभूता विष्णोस्सङ्कल्पानुरूपा नित्यानन्दमयी मूलप्रकृतिरूपा शक्तिः ।

V K. pp 493-4

307 *Ibid*, p. 494.

308 *Ibid.* p. 508. Here the word, '*samāśrayaṇa*' is used to mean worship

the names, Viṣṇu, Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha. Among them Viṣṇu is the foremost and is called Ādimūrti [309] God, who is subtle, pervading every being, must be looked upon as not different from Him who presents Himself in the gross form of an idol, and worship must be carried out without having any idea of distinction between the two [310] These five forms are distinct from one another like the five fires—*Sabhya*, *Āhvanīya*, *Anvāhārya* *Gārhapatya*, and *Āvasathya*—and the five *prāṇas* [311] Viṣṇu is all-pervading, Puruṣa is animating, Satya has unlimited static experience, Acyuta does not change under external influence, and Aniruddha has no check from any source [312] Viṣṇu, also called Ādimūrti, has four forms called Mahāviṣṇu, Sadāviṣṇu, Vyāpin and Nārāyana Satya arose from Mahāviṣṇu, Acyuta from Sadāviṣṇu and Aniruddha from Vyāpin Purusa represents a part of Viṣṇu. *Dharma*, *jñāna*, *aiśvarya* and *vairāgya* are the qualities of Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha respectively [313]

309 Viṣṇu is called Ādimūrti *VK* p. 245, 509, *SA* XXXVII, 3b, 4a.

310 *SA*. XXXI 57

311 *VK* p. 509, See *SA* 29 for the derivative significance of the names of the five fires

312 *VK* p 510

313 *Ibid*. *SA* XXXVII 3

Cf

आसु मूर्तिषु कूटस्थः सूक्ष्ममूर्तिः सत्तामात्रः । सोऽत्र पर ब्रह्म विष्ण्वाख्यः ।

JK, p 52

विष्णोरंशः पुरुषः महाविष्णोरंशः सत्यः सदाविष्णोरंशोऽच्युतः व्यापिनोंऽशोऽनिरुद्धः इति ।

VK. pp. 508-10

Prakṛti is both sentient and insentient.[314] The former is the self which is ever associated with a material body and gets affected by it as a result of the deeds done by it before getting into it. The self migrates from body to body and suffers the results of its deeds. Insentient *prakṛti* is represented by the products of matter such as the five elements, mind, senses and other such things. The process of creation is stated to be due to God's will, but is not described as such.[315]

There is a glorious description of Viṣṇu who pervades the entire world and remains there as its inner controller. The universe is conceived as His body, several things in the created world becoming the limbs.

Vide :

यस्यास्यमग्निः द्यौर्मूर्धा खं नाभिः भूः पादं चक्षुषी अर्कनिशाकरौ दिक् श्रोत्रे ज्योतींष्याभरणानि उदधयोऽम्बरं भूतानीन्द्रियाणि अस्याकृतेः प्रमाणत्वं कल्पितं भृग्वादिभिः । तद्धेतुभि र्नावमन्तव्यममीमांस्यमाज्ञासिद्ध मिति कृत्वा तदुक्तविधिना कारयेत् ।

J.K. p. 100

This resembles the following *dhyānaśloka* in the *Visnusahasranāma* suggesting that one must have been borrowed from the other,

314 Vide

सा प्रकृतिर्द्विधा भवति चेतनाचेतनेति, अचेतना पञ्चभूतैर्मनोबुध्यहङ्काररूपैरष्टधा भिन्ना । अन्या जीवभूता चेतनेति ।

VK p 494.

315 There is no reference in the *Vaikhānasa* texts to the theory of creation *KA* mentions that Brahmā was asked by Viṣṇu to create the world (XXXVI, 5 to 7). *VK.* states that creation is effected at *Brahman's* will. (p 495).

though it is not possible to fix the priority or posteriority of either :

> भूः पादौ यस्यनाभिर्वियदसुरनिल श्चन्द्रसूर्यौ च नेत्रे
> कर्णावाशाशिरो द्यौर्मुखमपि दहनो यस्य वास्तेयमब्धिः ।
> अन्तस्थं यस्य विश्वं सुरनरखगो भोगिगन्धर्वदैत्यैः
> चित्रं रंरम्यते तं त्रिभुवनवपुषं विष्णुमीशं नमामि ॥

Cf

> क्षिति पादौ च यत्रं नाभिर्द्यौश्शिरश्शशिभास्करौ ।
> नेत्रे लोका महत्पूर्वा विभोर्यस्य शिरोरुहाः ॥
> दिशश्श्रोत्रे भुजाश्चैव विदिशस्सर्व एव हि ।
> आधारशक्तिपर्यन्त यस्य पातालसन्नतिः ॥

Paus XXXVI. 101-102

The selves are distracted by the Lord's *māyā* and, being subjected to the sway of passion, anger, avarice and others, commit sinful deeds which bring them to this world again and again.

These sufferings could be avoided once for all only by God's grace which could be obtained by worshipping Him

Vide :

भगवन्तं समाश्रित्य भक्त्या नारायणमुपासीत । तदुपासनात् सोऽपि भक्तवत्सलत्वात् भक्तानुकम्पया स्वमायां मोचयति । तत आत्मा सम्यज्ज्ञानं प्रविशति । पश्चादाश्रमधर्मयुक्तो भगवदाराधनं करोति ।

VK. p.507.

The worshipping of Visnu is enjoined as the means of obtaining security from the dangers of the world and freedom rom bondage. Here again worship of the Lord in the form of

the idol is declared to be the best[316] How this worship could be conducted effectively gets elaborate treatment in this *Āgama.*

The description[317] of the human body, as possessed of the *cakra* of twelve spokes, the *Kuṇḍalinī śakti*, various ducts (*nāḍī*), and the *cakras* made of them, along with the names of twelve 'nerves' like *pingalā*, *susumnā*, *iḍā* and others, reveal that the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* belongs to the *yoga* tradition. There is a detailed account of the practice of *yoga*[318] which is required for self-control. Deep meditation is needed to visualize God who occupies the heart of the self. The means of getting *mokṣa* is only through God's grace.[319]

While dealing with the performance of *yoga*, the value of the *mantras* is appropriately depicted. *Praṇava* is described as

316 अथ भगवत्समाश्रयणं चतुर्विधं भवति जपहुतार्चनध्यानमिति ।
तेष्वर्चनं सर्वार्थसाधनं स्यात् ।

VK pp 508-9 Other means are hard to practise.

Vide ·

एवं सदा ध्यातुमशक्यत्वात् । प्रतिमादिषु पञ्चमूर्तीनामभेदैः समावाह्याभ्यर्चयेत् । एतत्समूर्तार्चनम् । सर्वसिद्धिप्रदत्वात् गृहे देवायतने वा समूर्तार्चनमेव कारयेत् । अन्यथा न परं पदमाप्नोति । तस्मात् श्रुतिचोदितं परमगुह्यमेतत् ज्ञानयोगं च ज्ञात्वा समाचरेत् ।

317. *Ibid* pp 500-503

318. *Ibid* pp. 510-519

319 Vide ·

तदाराधनेन संसारार्णवनिमग्नो जीवात्मा परमात्मानं नारायणं पश्यति । सोऽप्यपुनरावृत्तिकं दिव्यलोकं प्रसादयति ।

Ibid. pp. 507-508.

resembling a human being encompassing the entire world.[320] A similar treatment is given to the *Gāyatri mantra*[321] There is then the representation of the syllables in the *Gāyatrīnyāsa* Each syllable has a presiding deity. The *japa* of this *mantra* thrice a day is declared to yield manifold benefits commencing from long life and ending with final release.[322]

Before explaining the process of meditation, the nature of the human body, its protection, development and attributes are set forth[323] The three qualities, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, are then described with reference to their features and the effects they produce in human beings.[324] As long as the self is encased in the physical body, there are three states of consciousness through which it gets experience, namely, waking, dream and deep sleep The state of transcendence is also attainable.[325]

The Lord is present in the central portion of the body where blazes forth a fire of golden hue in a triangular form The *bījākṣara*, *repha*, shines there with *bindu* and *nāda* The Lord is present within it as Yajñamūrti.[326] There is a *cakra* with twelve spokes in the navel. The self, which is under the influence of merit and sin, revolves there, resting on the vital airs, like the spider amidst its web. There is the *Kuṇḍalinī śakti* above the navel, covering the cavity of the *suṣumnā nāḍī*. The heart which is situated above the navel, has a brilliant flame as of the orb of the sun in the midst of which there is the form of Viṣṇu, shining like the rising sun, with four hands, two of which hold the discus and conch, the third in *abhaya* pose and the other.

320 *Ibid.* p. 485.

321 *Ibid* pp 487-488

322. *Ibid* pp. 489-491.

323 *Ibid.* pp 496-498.

324. *Ibid.* p 499.

325. *Ibid.*

326. *Ibid.* p. 500.

bedecked with ornaments, resting at the waist. He is with Śrī and Bhūdevī and a retinue. Nārāyaṇa is also present within the orb of the moon and shining at the tip of the nose. Vāsudeva shines in the upturned lotus at the top of the *suṣumnā nāḍī*.[327] Viṣṇu who is present in the heart must be meditated upon.[328]

The ducts (*nāḍī*) are stated to be 72,000 in number, of which *iḍā*, *piṅgalā*, *suṣumnā* and eleven others are prominent. The first three of these play an important role in man's contemplation and, even there, the *susmunā* is held to be the path for obtaining final release. These fourteen are spread over the body. Besides the five vital airs (*prāṇa* and others), there are five more with the names of *nāga*, *kūrma*, *kṛkara*, *devadatta* and *dhanañjaya* [329] Among them, *prāṇa* rests between mouth and nose, between heart and navel, and between the two great toes; *apāna* in the navel (i.e., in excretory and generative organs), *vyāna* in the joints, *udāna* in the throat, *samāna* all through the body, *nāga* in the throat, *kūrma* in the eyes, *kṛkara* in the stomach, *devadatta* throughout the body and *dhanañjaya* all over the body.[330]

Although *japa*, *homa*, *arcana* and *dhyāna* are declared to be the four courses for pleasing God, the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* stresses the significance of *arcana* which will accomplish all that one likes to achieve.

Vide

तेष्वर्चनं सर्वार्थसाधनं स्यात्

(*VK*. p.509)

Yet the path of meditation is described at great length. Unlike in the *yoga* system which treats the separation of the self

327. *Ibid*. pp. 500-2
328. *Ibid*. pp. 502-3.
329. *Ibid*. p. 503
330 *Ibid*. pp. 505-6.

from *prakṛti* as *yoga*, this system considers the union between the self and the Lord as *yoga*.

Vide ;

जीवात्मपरमात्मनो योग इत्यामनन्ति

(*VK* p 510)

Among the eight constituents of *yoga*, *yama* is said to be of ten kinds, of which the first two are identical with those given by Patañjali[331] *Asteya* is referred to by the word, '*acaurya*' *Brahmacarya* is stated to be the householder's attachment to his wife and, as such, means making no advances to other women. The other six which are stated here are *dayā*, *ārjava*, *kṣānti*, *dhairya*, *mitāśana* and *śauca* *Niyama* is are of ten kinds, of which *tapas* and *santoṣa* agree with the enumeration by Patañjali[332] Others are *āstikya*, *dāna*, *Viṣṇupūja* *Vedārthaśravaṇa*, *kutsitakarmasu lajjā*, *gurūpadeśaśraddhā*, *mantrābhyasa* and *homa* The use of the word, Viṣṇu, brings out the identity of the Godhead The seventh is an explanation of *hrī*, and the next shows the importance attached to the role played by the preceptor. The twentyfour divisions of *yama* and *niyama* make an aspirant fit for understanding meditative practices.[333]

Nine kinds of postures are enumerated with a description for each and a classification of them as the best, mediocre and ordinary[334] *Prāṇāyāma* gets a very detailed description in which it is shown how the vital airs are to be made to pass through the *nāḍis*. This purifies the *nāḍīs* and enables the aspirant to have the lotus of the heart spread out so as to make him see Nārāyaṇa there.[335]

331. *YS* II. 30

332. *Ibid* II, 31.

333. *VK* pp. 510-611.

334 *Ibid* pp. 511-12. Nine kinds are enumerated.

335. *Ibid*. p. 513.

Pratyāhāra is of five kinds. The senses are withdrawn from their objects The aspirant finds everything to be like himself. The vital airs are made to fill up the eighteen vulnerable spots in the body and thereby maintain complete cessation of external activity [336] *Dhāraṇā* is of eight kinds, namely, fixing up steadfastly the mind, control of *ākāśa* both within and without, control of the five elements and keeping the blissful body of God in the heart [337]

Dhyāna is of two kinds, according as the *niṣkala* and *sakala* forms of God are meditated upon The former is not available even to the gods and the latter is of the *nirguṇa* and *saguna* kinds. Through meditation the aspirant visualizes God as having supreme bliss for His form [338] Meditating upon God as the store of auspicious qualities, Yajñamūrti, Viṣṇu and Nārāyana, is of the latter kind with four subgroups having one for each of these forms [339] *Samādhi* is deep contemplation in which the self and God are in the same plane As a stone that is not hot becomes heated by the sun's heat, the self acquires a flawless and blissful nature on visualizing God and continues to experience Nārāyana As long as such a self remains in this world, it gets all kinds of *siddhis* and is practically released from bondage though embodied (*jīvanmukta*) [340] This stage of feeling and experiencing the blissful state of final release, while yet alive in this world, is not attainable by any means other than *yoga*. Since it is said that the self gets all *siddhis*, this stage is not the same as in the *Advaita* system

There are four states in the mental activity of man. They are the waking (*jāgrat*), dream (*svapna*), deep sleep (*suṣupti*) and

336 *Ibid* pp 514-515

337 *Ibid* pp 515-516.

338 *Ibid* pp 516-517

339. *Ibid* pp 517-519.

340. *Ibid*, p. 519.

transcendental (*turīya*). The effects on mental activities during these are respectively external knowledge, internal consciousness and enlightenment [341] The qualities are *dharma, jñāna, aiśvarya* and *vairāgya* which each of the five deities possesses [342]

The state of *moksa* is one of intimate union of the self with God.

Vide ·

विष्णोः सायुज्यमाप्नुयात्

JK. p 30

That this state should characterize the concept of *moksa* is justifiable, because the self, which emerges from *prakṛti*, that is, Śrī ever associated with God, should naturally get back to the place of emergence, of course, with this difference that it returns rid of all residue of *karma* and with full enlightenment.

The place to be attained is called Vaikuṇṭha, which, true to its name, cannot be deformed or maimed by any force. It is far above the three called Pramoda, Sammoda and Āmoda in the descending order, the last representing the stage wherefrom the regions called Visṇuloka begin. Viṣṇu is the deity in Āmoda, Mahāviṣṇu in Pramoda, Sadāviṣṇu in Sammoda, and Vyāpin who is Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha. The names of the three regions leading to Vaikuṇṭha have significance in the sense that they provide room for the enjoyment of divine bliss [343]

Among the pupils of Vikhanas, four, namely, Atri, Bhṛgu, Kāśyapa and Marīci, gave out their own versions of the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* which they had studied under Vikhanas. Unfortunately, only a portion of each version is now extant.

341. *JK* p 52,
342. *SA* 37 3, *JK* p. 52
343. *VK*. pp. 494-495.

The work of Marīci contains, in the last chapter of his *Vimānārcanakalpa*, a list of the works written by all the sages including himself. The basis for these works is the *Vaikhānasasūtra*. His *Ānandasaṃhitā*,[344] of which the *Vimānārcanakalpa* is a part, contains a slightly different list. Bhrgu's *Yajñādhikāra*[345] and Atri's *Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa*[346] contain their own lists. There is discrepancy in the number of texts and in their names as found in these lists.

Atri is stated to have written four texts named *Pūrvatantra*, *Ātreyatantra*, *Viṣṇutantra* and *Uttaratantra*, according to the version of the *Vimānārcanakalpa*. Bhrgu's version mentions eleven works among which *Sāmūrtacanadhikaraṇa* is stated to be *Uttaratantra*. Apart from the four in Marīci's list in which *Uttaratantra* is identified with *Samūrtarcanādhikaraṇa*, there are seven others among which a fragment of *Niruktādhikaraṇa* alone is available. All these are said to have contained 88,000 *ślokas*. Except for these two works, all are lost. Some of these end their names as '*tantra*' and others as '*saṃhitā*'.

Bhrgu's works are thirteen, according to Marīci, named *Khilatantra*, *Purātantra*, *Vāsanādhikāra*, *Citrādhikāra*, *Mānādhikāra*, *Kriyādhikāra*, *Arcanādhikāra*, *Yajñādhikāra*, *Varṇādhikāra*, *Prakirṇādhikāra*, *Pratigrhyādhikāra*, *Niruktādhikāra* and *Khilādhikāra*. The lists of others enumerate less works. Bhrgu's list had only ten. Among these, the *Kriyādhikāra* and *Yajñādhikāra* are available in print. The *Arcanādhikāra*, *Vāsanādhikāra*, and *Niruktādhikāra* are available as manuscripts. The *Mantrādhikāra*, *Citrādhikāra*, *Varṇādhikāra* and *Purātantra* are available in fragments. The rest are lost. All the thirteen works are stated to have contained 88,000 *ślokas*. Except two which end their names with the word '*tantra*,' the rest end in the word, '*adhikāra*'.

344 *Ibid.* p 520.

345. *Yajñādhikāra*, LI. 13-29.

346 *SA.* Appendix, 4,

Kāśyapa's works are three in the list of Marīci. They are *Satyakāṇḍa*, *Tarkakāṇḍa* and *Jñānakāṇḍa*. Atri's list adds *Santānakāṇḍa* to the list The *Ānandasaṁhitā* has a *karmakāṇḍa* Perhaps all these make his works five in number as stated by Bhrgu[347] and Atri [348] Except the *Jñānakāṇḍa* which is in print, others are lost All the works are said to have contained 64 000 *ślokas* They end their names with the word, '*kāṇḍa*.'

Marīci's works are eight, as stated in his *Samūrtarcanādhikarana* Their names are *Jayasaṁhitā*, *Ānandasaṁhitā*, *Saṁjñānasaṁhita*, *Vīrasaṁhitā*, *Vijayasaṁhita*, *Vijitasaṁhitā* *Vimalasaṁhitā* and *Jñānasaṁhitā* His other work, *Ānandasaṁhitā*, mentions *Kalpitasaṁhitā* in the place of the *Jñānasaṁhitā* Bhrgu's list enumerates eleven works. The list of Atri[349] mentions the works of one Āṅgirasa which are seven, some of them having different names Some of these are the same as those attributed to Marīci It is not clear whether Aṅgiras is another name for Marīci, but Angiras is not mentioned anywhere else as the author of the *Vaikhānasa* texts Among these, the *Vimānārcanakalpa* and *Ānanasaṁhitā* are alone available. The works, twenty-three in number, are stated to have contained 1,84,000 *ślokas*. The names of all these works end with the word '*saṁhitā*'

On the whole, the number of *saṁhitās* of the Vaikhānasas comes to sixty Among them, seventeen are available fully and in parts Eight of them have been published Two have not been printed at all. The remaining seven, which are also not in print, are available only in fragments.[350]

347. *Yajñādhikāra*, LI. 17, 27-29.

348. *SA*. Appendix, 4

349. *Ibid*. IV. 30, 31.

350 For an account of the lists of these texts, see 'Vaikhānasāgamasāhityasya sūcīkramah', *Vimarśa*, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 7-16.

These texts are written mainly in verse, as in the case of Atri and Bhrgu, but those of Kāśyapa and Marīci are in prose. All of them reveal a high level of literary attainment

In their contents, they are similar and, if there is any divergence, it is only in the more elaborate treatment of some topics in one than in another Among the four divisions into which these contents are grouped, it is the *kriyā pāda* that has received more attention than others, *Caryā* receiving some treatment The duties of a *vānaprastha* which are generally known as those of the *vaikhānasas*, the significant position which Vikhanas held in regard to rituals and the lack of emphasis on the importance of the ascetic order indicate that the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* is ritualistic to the core in its outlook and conception How best the life here could be lived in strict conformity to Vedic traditions and how effectively the Lord could be worshipped have received attention in these works. In fact, the ascetic and the *vānaprastha* are excluded from officiating as priests for certain rituals [351] The other two divisions of the *Āgama* receive only brief treatment.

In general, the texts deal with the methods of construction of temples and making images Installation, consecration and worship of the deities receive detailed treatment Special ceremonial baths are described with minute details. Festivals, both private and public, get procedural treatment, indicating the purposes to be served by conducting them Special emphasis is laid on the ways and means of performing the rites of purification and expiation

The *Śrauta* rituals receive special emphasis and all of them are declared as representing the various ways in which Viṣṇu is worshipped [352] Naturally, the various types of priests like the

351. *SA*, XXX 14b.

352. See under 275 *supra*.

ṛtvik, the *adhvaryu* and others have a prominent role to play in the rites connected with temple worship.[353] *Mantras* are frequently cited for use even for what may seem to be only a secular activity like turning up the earth at the chosen site to construct the basement for a temple. The directions for many an item are drawn from the *Sūtras* of Vikhanas

All are not entitled to adopt the directions contained in these texts and conduct worship in the temples Only that Brahmin who has had the study of the *Vedas* and has undergone the consecratory rites (*saṃskāras*) since conception, according to the rules laid down by Vikhanas in his *Kalpasūtras*, is competent to conduct the worship of the Lord in the temples.[354]

The *Vaikhānasas* are exclusive worshippers of Viṣṇu and do this worship as an obligatory duty without expecting any results

353 I *K* pp 228 229

354 Vide

वैखानसेन सूत्रेण निषेकादिक्रियान्वितम् ।
विप्रं स्वाध्यायसम्पन्नं गृहस्थं लक्षणान्वितम् ॥
वैखानसाख्यसूत्रोक्तशौचाचारसमायुतम् ।
श्रौताचारसमायुक्तं सन्ध्योपासनतत्परम् ॥
तत्सूत्रोक्तविधानेन नित्यहोमपरायणम् ।
पत्न्यग्न्यपत्यसंयुक्तं दयाद्यात्मगुणैर्युतम् ॥
सुप्रसन्नेन्द्रियं दान्तं ज्ञानिनं शान्तमानसम् ।
पारम्पर्यक्रमायातवैष्णवं भक्तिसंयुतम् ॥
अनन्यदेवता भक्तं नित्यं विष्णुपरायणम् ।
गृहविष्ण्वर्चनायुक्तं ध्यानकर्मणि निश्चलम् ॥
आलयार्चाविधानज्ञमनुक्तक्रमवर्जितम् ।
प्रायश्चित्तविधेत्तारमाचार्यं पूजयेद्बुधः ॥

S.A XXVII. 10-15

from it.[355] Some of the acts which are enjoined for worship are peculiar to their *Āgamas*. For instance, *maṇḍala*, *nyāsa* and the positions of the syllables in *mantras* are mentioned.[356] The ducts (*nāḍī*), *bindu* and other aspects of sonic creation[357] are treated with reference to meditation Śrī is considered as the power (*Śakti*) of Viṣṇu.[358]

The opinions of others described as '*kecit*'[359] are referred to. Perhaps, these persons were offering a different direction to certain practices which could not be effectively carried out, for want of materials or facilities mentioned in these *Āgama* texts

Though having an easy flow of graceful expressions, archaic forms[360] are not absent in these texts This does not at once indicate that they should be very ancient. Such expressions are generally met with in the epics and *Purāṇas* and also in the *Kalpasūtras* Their presence in these texts could be explained on the ground that the authors of these works were sages who were practising rituals

The sages Marici, Bhrgu, Atri and Kāśyapa, are very ancient and, as it is generally admitted, many of these texts must have taken their rise in North India The authors of the *Kalpasūtras* mostly hailed from North India. Curiously enough,

355 See *SA* Introduction, p XXII

356. *VK* pp 282-3 285 338, 485-491 *SA* LX 71, 72,

357 *VK* pp 500-505

358 *Vide*.

विष्णो र्विभूतिः श्रीः ... मूलप्रकृतिरूपा शक्तिः ।

Ibid. pp. 493. 4.

359 *Ibid* pp 103 182, 190, 488.

360 *KA* X, 41 , *SA*, LXXIX, 18.

the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* as such is not well-known in North India. This is perhaps because the *Kalpasūtras* of Vikhanas are followed by a handful of people who belong to the *Taittirīya* recension of the *Krsna Yajurveda* which is popular only in South India where the mode of worship in the temples must also have been derived from the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* Most Vaisnava temples in the south are at present governed by the *Vaikhānasa* tradition. Perhaps, these texts were more popular among the Tamilians Words of Tamil origin are found in some texts [361]

The *Samūrtārcanādhikarana,* which forms part of the *Atrisaṃhitā*, has 83 chapters containing about 5,000 *ślokas* Twentyfive chapters of this work are concerned with architectural details and eleven with the rites of expiation One full chapter (83rd) is devoted to the worship of the sun The priests who attend to the worship of God in temples, are required to be kept in contentment, as otherwise the locality where the particular temple is situated would be visited with misery [362] The *gotra* and *pravara* of 47 different families are mentioned in a separate chapter (63rd) The colophon of this work refers to this text as taught orally by Atri (*Atriprokta*) The printed text has a supplementary chapter called *Rathapratisṭāvidhi* as belonging to *Purātantra*, one of the four works of Atri

The printed text has an Appendix I containing six chapters representing a version based on a different manuscript Bhrgu, Kāśyapa, Āngirasa and Atri received teaching about the highest *dharma*, the Supreme Deity and the method of worship from the four faces of Brahmā respectively facing the east, south, west and north quarters [363] While mentioning the various branches of learning, those of the Buddhists and Jains are also

361 *Karaṇḍikā: VK* p. 88, *Culli, ibid.* pp. 154, 293,

362 *SA.* XLIII. 115-118.

363. *Ibid.* p. 474.

included.[364] The *Āgamas* are said to be five, namely, *Vaikhānasa*, *Sāttvata*, *Tīrtha*, *Aikāntika* and *Mūlaka*[365] The Lord uttered some expressions taking Himself the form of a bird, and Brahmā who searched for the meaning of those expressions is here known as Vikhanas. The system which Vikhanas expounded became divided into four groups connected with the names of Atri, Bhrgu, Marīci and Kāśyapa. The *Sāttvata* mode is based on the *Ekāyana Veda*[366] The *Tīrtha* kind has 24 *tantras* and prescribes four kinds of initiation (*dīksā*). It has four divisions, *jñāna*, *yoga*, *kriya* and *caryā* as in other *Āgamas*, and an additional section on *prāyaścitta*[367] The other two are not treated, except for the mention of their names The subject matter in all these five is stated to be one and the same[368] The *Vyūhas* are stated to be five in the *Vaikhānasa* system and four in the *Pāñcarātra* The *pranava* represents the threefold *vyūha*[369] Mention is made of the six infirmities (*ūrmi*),[370] namely, grief, illusion, hunger, thirst, decay and death, the six sheaths[371] (*kośa*) of skin, flesh, blood, sinew, marrow and bone, and the six phases of existence[372] (*bhāva*), namely, taking birth, existing, changing, growing, declining and dying Six paths (*adhvā*)[373] and six relations, namely, *para*, *apara* *mahān*, *antarālaka*, *divya* and *divyetara*,[374] which are connected with sound and sense, are also listed

364 *Ibid* p 478

365 *Ibid* Appendix I 3

366 *Ibid* p 480, 4-7

367 *Ibid* p 481, 16-18

368 *Ibid* p. 481 10

369 *Ibid* p 483 23-26

370 *Ibid* p 483 41

371 *Ibid* p 483 42-43.

372. *Ibid* p. 484 43-44 This view has held by Vārṣāyaṇi.

373. *Ibid* p 484 44-45.

374 *Ibid*. p. 484, 45-50.

The name of *Śaivasiddhānta* is given for 28 kinds. The *Pāśupata* and *Yāmala* are of six and nine kinds respectively.[375] The system of the Buddhists, *Nyāya* and others are then enumerated. The names of the texts of the *Pāñcarātra* and those of the four sages of the *Vaikhānasa* are given For the latter together the number of *ślokas* is stated to be 64,000 and the number of texts as twentyfive [376] The nature of reality and the eight-limbed *yoga* get treated in the next two chapters [377]

There is the Appendix II which deals with the nature and geography of the world and has only one chapter called *Bhuvanakośavarnana* as taken from Atri's *Visnutantra* At the end of the printed text, there is a chapter numbered as eight, belonging to Atri's authorship and entitled *Durnaksatraprāyaś-cittavidhi*

The information contained in two appendices is very useful, Yet the mention of *adhvā*, which is generally treated in the other *Āgamas*, *Śākta*, *Śaiva* and *Pāñcarātra*, does not establish it to be a genuine doctrine held by the *Vaikhānasa* system

Among the texts of Bhrgu, the *Kriyādhikāra* has 39 chapters containing about 4000 *ślokas* Worship of God is of three kinds · in the mind, in the image and in the sacred fire The first kind must not be taken as meditation, but as offering worship in all its details mentally conceived The second is carried out with respect to the idol which is installed The third kind consists in mentally conceiving God as seated amidst the sacred fire and making offerings to Him in that fire [378] The worship of the idol is the best among the three [379]

375 *Ibid* pp 486-6, 5-11

376. *Ibid.* pp 487-488

377. *Ibid.* pp. 488-504.

378 *KA* I. 5-12.

379. *Ibid.* I. 13, 14 a.

Expiatory rites are dealt with in five chapters. It is also shown how to get over minor lapses during worship without undertaking an elaborate expiatory process. There are references to the treatment of the topic in the context in the *Yajñādhikāra*,[380] *Niruktādhikāra*[381] and *Khilādhikāra*[382] The opinion of Aṅgiras is cited more than once[383]

Bhṛgu's *Yajñādhikāra* contains 51 chapters, of which expiatory rites cover six. The main subject-matter is the worship of God according to the directions contained in the *Vaikhānasa* system The *Prakīrṇādhikāra* of Bhṛgu is a supplement to Marici's *Vimānārcanakalpa* and Atri's *Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa* It contains 24,000 *ślokas* in 37 chapters The greatness of the *Vaikhānasa* system, offences (*apacāra*) and the nature of sin are treated here. Some of the *ślokas* in the last chapter are identical with some in the *Manusmṛti*. Bhṛgu is mentioned as the propounder of the doctrines of the *Manusmṛti*. He may be perhaps identical with this Bhṛgu. Six chapters of this *Prakīrṇādhikāra* are devoted to expiatory rites. The *Khilādhikāra* of Bhrgu has three sections called *jñāna*, *kriyā* and *yoga*, dealing respectively with the *tattvajñāna*, practice of worship and meditation on God.

Kāśyapa's *Jñānakāṇḍa* is in prose and contains 108 chapters. While recommending the worship of the idol, it is said that here the eyes and mind get delighted through such worship and perfect remembrance of God becomes possible. This gives rise to devotion and faith He who has faith and devotion has complete success in all endeavours[384] There is mention of nine kinds of regions named Vaiṣṇava, Brāhma, Raudra, Aindra,

380. *Ibid.* XVIII. 68
381. *Ibid.* XIX, 124
382. *Ibid.* IX. 236 ; XI 68 ; XXX. 129.
383 *Ibid.* IX. 69, 79 , XIV, 358, 171.
384. *JK.* p. 4.

Gāruda, Bhautika, Āsura, Rākṣasa and Paiśāca. Only the first is to be chosen for the erection of a temple.[385] How the villages and towns are to be formed is detailed in four chapters (14-17) The person who is devoted to God, must set apart one third of his property for the maintenance of his family and spend the remainder for building a temple and maintaining it [386]

Among the five forms the unchanging and highest one is *Brahman* called Viṣṇu His form is characterized by bare existence and is subtle. He is then partless The question that would rise then is regarding the forms of Satya, Acyuta, Puruṣa and Aniruddha. It is said that these are only the created forms of Viṣṇu, like the shape of the written characters (*lipi*) The characters are only the symbols of various sounds [387] Close union of the self with God marks the stage of *moksa* [388] Twelve chapters are devoted to expiatory rites

Marici's *Vimānārcanakalpa*, which is written in prose, has 101 chapters of which 40 are devoted to the construction of temples, six to the daily worship, three to the bath, eleven to the conduct of festivals and installation of other idols, nineteen to the acts of expiation, one to the deities in charge of the holy fire-pit (*agnikuṇḍa*), four to the code of practices, fourteen to *tattva* and one to the extent of the *Vaikhānasa* texts

The text opens with two stanzas of benediction in honour of God as Śrinivāsa who gets a glorious description Marici is the narrator of this text. At the outset he speaks of the means of getting final release God (Nārāyaṇa) must be worshipped with the *mantras* taken from the four *Vedas* in a manner prescribed by them. Finally, that self which adopts this way of life,

385. *Ibid* pp. 12, 13.
386. *Ibid*. p. 31.
387. *Ibid*. pp. 52, 53.
388. *Ibid*. p, 30.

would reach His place.[389] Passages from the *Ṛgveda*, *Taittirīya Āranyaka*, *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* and *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* are cited to show that Viṣṇu is the Supreme Being [390] Worship of the Supreme Being (*Parama Puruṣa*) is called '*Vimanārcana*',[391] which explains the title of the work.

The results which accrue by this worship are stated to be equal to those of performing *Agnihotra* even for those who do not do it and all-round prosperity for those who do [392] Marīci declares he will set forth the way of doing this worship, which he denotes by the name, '*Kriyāmargā*', suggesting that this text is devoted to the *kriyā* aspect of the *Agamas* [393] This is evident from the large number of chapters (1–40) devoted to the procedural details regarding the construction of the temple and installation of images there. On this account, it is not implied that the *caryā* aspect is not given importance Chapters 41–85 discuss this matter Special mention must be made of the detailed treatment given to the conduct of festivals[394] and to the acts of expiation [395] Nineteen chapters which detail the latter, indicate the pro-Vedic character of the *Vaikhānasa* system

389 *VK* p 2

390 *Ibid* pp 2-3

391 *Ibid* p 3 The word, '*vimāna*' which means the story in the structure of the temple, indicates that God must be worshipped in a temple.

392 *Ibid* p 3

393 Vide

क्रमेण क्रियामार्गं विस्तरतो वक्ष्यामि ।

Ibid. p 3.

KA has seven chapters for this The very title, *Kriyādhikāra*, suggests the importance given to *kriyā* · *SA*. XXXIX.

394 *VK* L-LIV *KA* has two chapters, XIV & XVI.
SA LIII-LVII *JK* LXXXVIII-XC.

395. *VK*. LXI-LXXX. *KA* has twelve chapters, XX-XXXI.
SA. LXVI-LXXX. *JK*. LXXXIV -CIII.

in particular and of the *Āgamas* in general. Treatment of *tattva*, yogic practice and *mokṣa* shows that the *jñāna* and *yoga* aspects are not ignored in *Vaikhānasa Āgama*.[396]

These texts of the four sages lay great stress on the practical side, such as the construction of temples and worship of the idol. Architecture and iconography receive greater attention in the *Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa* of Atri and the *Vimānārcanākalpa* of Marīci Whatever be the topic, the *Jñānakāṇḍa* of Kāśyapa gives a complete and logical treatment.

This title may seem to be inappropriate to the work of Kāśyapa For it is not *tattvajñāna* that receives treatment here. On the other hand, the practical side of the *Āgama* gets elaborated, and the word, '*jñāna*', has relevance to the knowledge of this aspect The title thus gets its justification The nature of reality is dealt within this work in a casual manner,[397] while its treatment is more detailed in the work of Marīci The *yoga* and *caryā* aspects get brief treatment in the works of Marīci and Bhṛgu. The works which are lost might perhaps have conveyed more information on the *jñāna* and *yoga* aspects

It is true that Vedic *mantras* alone are prescribed in these texts for every ritual, In addition, *mantras* are cited from the *Mantrapraśna* of the *Vaikhānasas*.

396. *VK.* LXXXV-C. The appendix in *SA* has a chapter on *yoga*.

397. *JK.* p. 2,

CHAPTER V

THE PĀÑCARĀTRA ĀGAMA:

Validity and Antiquity

The *Pāñcarātra Āgama*, which is mainly concerned with the worship of God in temples and houses, treats also of philosophy, linguistic occultism (*mantra*) and the theory of mystical diagrams (*yantra*). It is based on the *Ekāyana* recension of the *Śukla Yajurveda* and so is Vedic in its foundations. Vedic *mantras* are frequently used. Yet it reveals a liberal and progressive outlook in throwing open its portals to all, irrespective of caste and sex, thus bringing within its fold even those who are excluded by tradition from the study of the *Vedas* Consequently, *mantras* are created for their use and also for others. These are called *tāntrika mantras*, It is the Vaiṣṇava initiation (*dīkṣā*) that confers on the aspirants the necessary qualification to participate directly or otherwise in the ritualistic performance of worship.

A passage in the *Pāñcarātra* text, *Viṣṇusamhitā*, defines the word '*tantra*' as that which expounds all objects and protects people from fear [398] Five *tantras* are enumerated as derived from Vāsudeva They are *Vaikhānasa*, *Sāttvata*, *Śikhin*, *Aikāntika* and *Mūlaka* [399] According to the first, Viṣṇu must be worshipped at all times. The family has to be looked after by the worshipper with what he gets unasked The second is also known as *Bhāgavata Pāñcarātra*. The third refers to that system the

398 *VS* II 10-35

399. *Ibid*. II. 37-39.

adherents of which worship Viṣṇu twice a day and take to agriculture, trade and cattle-breeding as the means of livelihood. The *Aikāntika* system is adopted by those who worship Viṣṇu once in a day, render service to the twice-born and live on begging. The *Mūlaka* is taken up by those who worship Viṣṇu through thought, word and deed, and live on what is obtained unasked and on what they get from their pupils[400] A slightly different classification is offered by Atri, but it is not complete as regards information on the last two Besides, the third one is called *Tīrtha* instead of *Śikhin*.[401]

It is not possible to identify the systems of *Śikhin*, *Aikāntika* and *Mūlaka* It is also doubtful whether there were systems with these names. These may not be names of any particular systems, but of groups who were identified thus for their distinct practices The *Śikhin* may refer to a group who wear the tuft and do not remove it except when they enter into certain orders of recluses[402] The *Aikāntika* may refer to that group which depends exclusively on Viṣṇu for getting *mokṣa* and for other purposes as well.[403] The identification of the *Mūlakas* is not easy

400 *Ibid* II. 26-35

401 *SA* Appendix, I 3.

402 SKS *Brahmarātra*, V 33b-42 P V Kane: *History of Dharmaśāstra* Vol II Part II pp 939-41

403. Vide

यो मोक्षफलेन साकं फलान्तराण्यपि भगवत एवेच्छति स
एकान्ती देवान्तरशून्य इत्यर्थः ।

Yatīndramatadīpikā, p. 77.

Vide :

भक्तिज्ञानाभ्यामन्यत् फलं भगवतोऽपि यो नेच्छति स
परमैकान्ती ।

Ibid.

Cf. *Vedāntakārikāvalī*, VIII, 18, 19.

The name, '*Pāñcarātra*,' is from the word, '*pañcarātra*',[404] a compound made up of two words '*pañca*' and '*rātra*' with the addition of the suffix '*ac*'. The word '*pañca*' means 'five' and *rātra*[405] is a changed form of the word, '*rātri*', which is derived from the root, '*rā*', to give, with the suffix, *trip*.[406] The word '*rātri*', which means 'night', is interpreted as that which gives rise to pleasure.[407] Then, the word, '*pāñcarātra*' may be taken to mean a period of five nights and must have been used later to mean a system on the origin of which a period consisting of five nights has direct bearing.

Several explanations are offered to justify the name '*Pāñcarātrā*' for this system. These could be broadly classified under four groups.

The meaning of the word, '*rātri*', is explained in eight ways under the first group. The other five systems, though great, become as night by the side of this system, like the moon and multitude of stars during the day. Here the word, '*rātri*', is used as a nominal verb. What these five systems are do not get any referenee. A second explanation states that other systems seem dead by the side of this system like others (luminous objects) when the sun is shining.[408] '*Rātri*' stands for the

404. The neuter gender of this word is formed according to the rule.

संख्यापूर्वं रात्रे बहुलम् ।

Lingānuśāsana, 131

405. *Aṣṭādhyāyī* II 4 29.

406. Vide राशादिभ्यां त्रिप् । *Uṇādisūtra*, 507

407. Vide —Bhānujidīkṣita on the *Nāmalingānuśāsana*, I 4.4.

408. पञ्चेतराणि शास्त्राणि रात्रीयन्ते महान्त्यपि ।
तत्सन्निधौ समाख्यासौ ते न लोके प्रवतते ॥
चन्द्रतारागणं यद्वच्छोभते नैव वासरे ।
तथेतराणि शोभन्ते पञ्च नैवास्य सन्निधौ ॥
पञ्चत्वमथवा यद्वद्दीप्यमाने दिवाकरे ।
ऋच्छन्ति रात्रयस्तद्वदितराणि तदन्तिके ॥

Pās, I. 1. 72-74.

five objects of the senses, sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, or the five elements, is the third explanation These get destroyed when the higher knowledge is acquired. Thus *Pāñcarātra* destroys all erroneous cognitions. According to the fourth explanation, the five elements are the products of *avidyā* which gets destroyed by the system The fifth explanation takes the word, '*rātri*', to mean the five qualities of the elements They are taken to represent the embodied beings. The system deals with the selves getting those bodies and their getting rid of them, The next explanation declares that for man, the elements (*bhūta*), subtle elements (*tanmātrā*), ego (*garva*), intellect (*buddhi*) and unmanifest matter (*avyakta*) are the nights. These are dealt with here and hence the name. A seventh explanation takes the root, '*rā*', in the sense of taking The word '*pañca*' stands for the five senses, their objects, five elements or their qualities. This word '*Pañca*' with the root '*rā*' means human beings who take these which are donated by the word '*Pañca*' The human beings are called '*Pāñcarā*'. They are protected by the system and so the name is '*Pāñcarātra*'. The eighth and last explanation takes knowledge to be of five kinds arising from the *Purāṇa*, *Veda*, *Vedānta*, *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga* By the side of *Pāñcarātra*, these become like night, that is, become worthless and lustreless.[409]

In the second group of explanations, the word '*rātri*' is taken in the sense of knowledge which is of five kinds—*Sāttvika*, *Rājasa*, *Tāmasa*, *Nairguṇa* and *Sarvataḥ Param*. Of these, the

409 *VS* II. 49b-61c, *Viṣṇutantra* cited in the Introduction to *Pars* p. 37 *Viśvāmitra*, II 3-8, *Pars* I. 39b-41c

Vide:—

पुराणं वेदवेदान्तं तथान्यत् सांख्ययोगजम् ॥
पञ्चप्रकारं विज्ञेय यत्र राऽयायतेऽब्जज ।
फलोत्कर्षवशेनैव पञ्चरात्रमिति स्मृतम् ॥

Paus. xxxviii 307b—308.

first three refer to the knowledge of the three *gaṇas* of matter, the fourth relating to non-material Nature and the last to the transcendental nature of *Brahman* The *Pāñcarātra* system is said to treat of these matters and hence the name [410] A second explanation refers to the names of five persons who presented the doctrines of the systems after which the sections are known, making the total number five The names of the sections are *Brahmarātra*, *Śivarātra*, *Indrarātra*, *Nāgarātra* and *Rṣirātra*.[411]

The explanations offered to the word, '*pañca*', come under the third group The fivefold manifestations of God by means of His *Para*, *Vyūha*, *Vibhava*, *Antaryāmin* and *Arcā* forms may be meant by this word [412] A second interpretation is that Brahmā propitiated Visnu for five nights in five ways near the five weapons of the Lord and hence the name.[413] According to a third explanation, Brahmā lost the *Vedas* to the demons, Madhu and Kaiṭabha. He approached Visnu with profound grief and requested directions as to how He is to be worshipped. The Lord asked him to offer worship for five nights with the *Dvādaśākṣara* and *aṣṭākṣara* This way of worship became known as *Pāñcarātra* [414] The fourth and fifth explanations take the word, '*pāñca*,' to mean the fivefold classification of the daily routine and the five sacraments respectively [415]

410 *Śabdakalpadruma*, III, p 13

411 *Bhāradvāja-saṁhitā*, II 12.

412. Vide ·

तत्परव्यूहविभवस्वभावादिनिरूपणम् ॥
पञ्चरात्राह्वयं तन्त्रं मोक्षैकफललक्षणम् ।

Ahs. XI. 63b-64a.

413. *SA* Appendix, III. pp 480-481, *ślokas* 8b-9a.

414 *KA*. XXXVI. 11-14a.

415. Schrader, pp, 24-25.

The sixth interpretation is based on the number of sages who propagated the doctrines of the system. Śāṇḍilya, Aupagāyana, Mauñjyāyana, Kauśika and Bhāradvāja, who were incarnations of the five weapons of the Lord, propitiated Him through penance. The Lord appeared before them and taught to each one of them for five nights the *Ekāyana Veda*, also known as *Rahasyāmnāya* Hence the system is reputed as *Pāñcarātra* [416] According to a seventh explanation the five topics that are dealt with in the system gave the name to it. The topics are reality, the means of getting *mokṣa*, devotion, yogic practice and the objects of the world.[417]

The eighth interpretation accounts for the name of the system '*Pāñcarātra*' by referring to the *pranava* as having arisen from five sources. *Brahman* is held to be undivided and the other four are from *māyā*. From Sankarsana (or Balarāma) arose '*a*'; from Pradyumna, representing *Prajñā*, '*u*', from Aniruddha who is of the nature of *Prajñā*, '*m*'. Krsṇa is the remaining source Thus, *pranava* arose from five sources It represents the *Pāñcarātra* system [418] Lastly, the system gets this name as it arose for living beings of five kinds (four castes and an inferior caste) for whom it was intended.[419]

Before examining how far the explanations cited above are acceptable, it is of interest to refer to a sacrifice named *Pañcarātra* mentioned in the *Śatapatha-brāhmana* (XIII 6 1 1) Purusa Nārāyaṇa is stated here to have had the idea of performing this sacrifice which lasted for five days in order to acquire superiority over all beings In a preceding chapter of

416 *IS* XXI 519-533

417 Schrader, p 24

418 *Aniruddha S* I 39a, *Gopālatāpanīya Upanisad*.

419. *Aniruddha S* I 39b.

Cf. Bharadwaj, K. D., *The Philosophy of Rāmānuja*, pp. 18-19, 23-24

the *Brāhmaṇa* (XII.3.4), it is shown how He sacrificed Himself and became the whole world. The rite, *Agniṣṭoma*, was performed on the first day, *Ukthya* on the second, *Atirātra* on the third, *Ukthya* on the fourth and *Agnistoma* on the last day. This is also called in the context by the other name, '*Purusamedha.*' The commentator, Harisvāmin,[420] notes that Puruṣa desired to have all the sentient as also the insentient beings under his control, and knowing that *Purusamedha* had to be performed to achieve this end, performed it. Then he became Nārayaṇa. This sacrifice has a bearing on the *Purusasūkta*[421] of which the seer is Nārāyaṇa. The act of offering Puruṣa as the victim in this sacrifice, *Puruṣamedha*, is symbolic in character and is found represented by a similar act in the *Purusasūkta*

The word, '*rātra*', in the name, '*Pañcarātra*', of this sacrifice does not mean night, but the whole day (*ahorātra*) which begins with one dawn and ends with the next dawn. This name has a bearing on the name of the *Pāñcarātra* system. Without going into the meaning of the words which constitute the compound word, '*Pāñcarātra*', it is possible to find the basis for naming the system after the name of the sacrifice, '*Pañcarātra*' This sacrifice shows how Purusa became Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Deity having control over the sentient and insentient beings Here is a reference to the *Vyūha* concept involving self-manifestation. The *Pañcarātra* sacrifice provides thus the philosophical interpretation of the fivefold manifestation of God by means of His *Para*, *Vyūha*, *Vibhāva*, *Antaryāmin* and *Arcā* forms. This explanation accords well with the statement that He composed, out of the original *śāstra*, the *Pāñcarātra*

420 *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* with Com. Mādhyandina edn. p. 126.

421. *RV* X. 90. 11-14.

describing His fivefold nature such as *Para* and *Vyūha*.[422] This explanation comes under the fourth group.

The name, '*Pāñcarātra*' may be understood without reference to the component elements, '*pañca*' and '*rātra*'. Thus, it is a system dealing with Reality (*tattva*) and the means of liberation. The five forms of the Lord, concepts of the self, *mokṣa* and the theory of the periodical creation and dissolution of the world are matters brought under *tattva* and treated in this *Āgama* in the *Jñāna-pāda*. *Yoga*, worship of the Lord in the *arcā* form and the ways and means of worship are dealt with in the *Yoga*, *Kriyā* and *Caryā* sections. While dealing with the details of *Caryā*, it has become necessary to prescribe the divisions of the day (*rātri*, literally, *ahorātra*) into five parts and to indicate what should be done under each division The scope of the *Pāñcarātra* system is well explained in the *Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā*. The concept of *Vyūha* which forms the basis of the *Pañcarātra Sattra* is taken up in the *Sāttvata* system which therefore acquired the name, '*Pāñcarātra*'. No specific significance need be attached to the words, '*pañca*' and '*rātra*'

However, the number, five, has come to play a prominent role in the evolution of the five forms of God and the fivefold division of the daily routine The earliest texts of the *Pāñcarātra* refers to these. Yet the *Ahirbhudhnya* does not include the forms of *Antaryāmin* and *Arcā* while enumerating them. The *Lakshmi-tantra* and *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā* do not refer to the form of the *Antaryāmin*.

422. Vide :

सदागममयात् तस्मात् केवलाद्दिव्यशासनात् ।
निर्ममे सारमुद्धृत्य स्वयं विष्णुरसंकुलम् ॥
तत्परव्यूहविभवस्वभावादिनिरूपणम् ॥
पञ्चरात्राह्वयं तन्त्रं मोक्षैकफललक्षणम् ।

Ahs. XI. 62b-64a.

It will not be, therefore, correct to connect the name, '*Pāñcarātra*', with the number of forms which God assumes or with that of the divisions of the routine of the day Though some kind of justification could be offered for this theory, it will not be correct either to connect the concept of *pañcasamskāra* with the name of the system.

The statement in the *Ahirbudhnya-samhitā* [423] that the *Pāñcarātra* system was formulated by Viṣṇu Himself gave rise to the theory that the Lord Himself taught the *Sāttvata* system to five sages for five nights (literally, '*ahorātra*' or simply 'day'). And this is one of the explanations given for the name, '*Pāñcaratra*'. There could be no doubt about 'five' being the meaning of '*pañca*', but the interpretation given to the word, '*rātri*', must be late in orgin. Found in the *Īśvarasamhitā* [424] it clashes with the five divisions of the *Sanatkvmāra-samhitā* called '*Rātras*', named after Brahmā, Śiva. Indra, Rsi and Brhaspati However, this could be resolved by taking the five sages to be included among the *ṛsis* and by admitting that there were also others like Brahmā and Śiva who had acquired knowledge of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition

Ahirbudhnya teaches Nārada [425] that there are five systems, namely, *Trayī* (representing the three *Vedas*), *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Pāśupata* and *Pāñcarātra*, among which the last mentioned alone provides the means for obtaining liberation This statement should have made the sages take *Pāñcarātra* alone as the perfect system by the side of which the other four pale into insignificance To make this clear, the sages understand the word, '*rātri*', to mean 'becoming dark or obscure'. In order to proclaim the high status of the *Pāñcarātra*, they have taken the word '*pañca*' to mean many things. Yet all those interpretations

423. *Ibid.*

434. *IS.* XI 519-534.

425. *Ahs.* XI. & XII.

are late in origin and seem to have no direct bearing on the name of the system Nor is there any justification for taking the word '*rātri*' in the sense of knowledge. Likewise, there is no need to trace the rise of the *praṇava* from *Vyūha* All other interpretations do not seem persuasive The *Vaikhānasa* texts[426] also seek to explain the significance of the name by attaching importance to the words constituting the name. This also must be taken to represent a later attempt to justify the name through the component parts of the compound

It is worth considering in this context the views of Prof. J. A B van Buitenen[427] on the name, '*Pāñcarātra*' The learned professor adduces evidence to show that the connotations attributed by Indian scholars to the word are not tenable. He offers some plausible pleas to take this name in a different sense and to justify its significance in a different setting

The *Pāncarātra* texts, which are available at present, have more of a ritualistic character than philosophical The *Āgama-prāmāṇya* of Yāmuna, the earliest work which vindicates the validity of the *Pāñcarātra*, touches only the ritualistic aspect of the system The philosophical portions of the *Āgama* texts should have found their way into them in later days.

Even here, the ritualistic contents, which show the growth of many concepts for several centuries, could not be traced to a single source. The attempt, made by Indian scholars, to connect the name of the system with the *Pañcarātra-sattra* to establish its non-*yajñic* character, indicates the eagerness of the scholars to establish, for the *Pāñcarātra* rituals, a link with the Vedic rituals.

On the side of the philosophical background, the *Mahābhārata* (*Moksa-dharma-parvan*) contains two accounts of the

426. *SA*, p. 480, *KA* p 411

427. Introduction to *Āgamaprāmāṇya*, pp. 6-16.

Vyūha doctrine. Nara, Nārāyana, Hari and Kṛṣna, all of them being the sons Dharma, belong to the earlier concept The later development, as found in the second account, seems to be based upon the theistic Sāṅkhya doctrines preached in the epic. In the background of these dectrines, there arose a different concept of *Vyūha* in which *Puruṣa*, the Supreme Being, *jīva*, *manas* and *ahankāra* play a prominent role with the names, Vāsudeva, Saṅkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. The earlier concept is replaced by the later one.

Names like Pañcayajña, Pañcakālakartrpati and Pāñcarātrika are used by Nārada to address the Lord. Yet, no convincing explanation is offered about what the word, '*rātra*', means and why the word '*pañca*' is used with it in the name of the system.

The learned professor therefore turns to other sources to get at the sense of the name. The *Brhatkathā-śloka-saṅgraha* of Budhasvāmin represents a recluse as a *pāñcarātrika* and also enjoins that a recluse must not stay in a village for more than three days and in a town for more than five days [428]

Vide:

एकरात्रं वसेद्ग्रामे पञ्चरात्रं मुनिः पुरे ।
इति प्रव्रजिताचारं एतं वेद भवानिति ।

1b: 22· 220

A prosperous farmer is represented in this context to have left his profession and gone in quest of *mokṣa* He is reported to have said :

ध्यानाध्यायप्रधानं च विहितं भिक्षुकर्म यत् ।
वैश्यकर्माभियुक्तस्य तस्य नामापि नास्ति मे ॥

Ibid 1b 63

The professor observes on the strength of these and similar references in the same work of Budhasvāmin that the word,

428, Thi is mentioned also in the *Brahmapurāna*, II. 34, 49.

'*pāñcarātra*', could have been coined to denote a person who becomes a recluse and stays in a town for five days only. Evidently, such persons should have been wandering sages and recluses The Vedic rituals did not necessarily form part of their practices The farmer refers to himself as a Vaiśya. He has taken to the way of life of ascetics and so is referred to as a *pāñcārātrika* He visited the holy places of the Hindus and Buddhists and at last became a Buddhist. " A *Pāñcarātrika* in this very large sense is therefore an itinerant religious recluse who follows the five-nights rule regardless of doctrinal allegiance " *Pāñcarātra* must have been associated originally with devotional religion Later, the word '*Pāñcarātrika*' must have been formed from this word in this general sense and must have meant a follower of five-nights rule, *pāñcarātrānusārin* The name, '*Pāñcarātra*', should have meant this tradition which its adherents followed.

In course of time, the devotional element of such votaries must have come to characterize a tradition associated with the name of Viṣṇu, The name '*Pāñcarātra*' must have been invested with specific features which substituted for the Vedic rituals Āgamic practices. It is thus quite likely that the name '*Pāñcarātra*' owes its origin to this rule of five-nights The several explanations, which are offered in the *Saṁhitās* of this school, are mutually contradictory and appear to be based on no reliable tradition.

The findings of the learned professor deserve very careful study It will be prudent to agree with him in treating the several explanations contained in the *Saṁhitās* as not very convincing One is left only with speculation No evidence, outside the texts which offer these explanations, is forthcoming All the same, it seems difficult to subscribe fully to the views expressed by Dr. van Buitenen.

The formation of the word '*pāñcarātrika*' requires explanation. It is formed from the word, '*pāñcarātra*', with the

addition of the suffix, *thak*, according to the *Aṣṭādhyāyi-sūtra*, "*tatra niyuktaḥ*".[429] Then the word means one who is engaged in '*pāñcarātra*'. This word also is a compound of the *dvigu* kind, meaning a group of five-nights There are words formed like this with a numeral as the first member and '*rātri*' as the second member For instance, '*dvirātra*', '*trirātra*', '*daśarātra*' etc All these occur one after another in *Āpastamba-śrauta-sūtra*[430] The word '*trirātra*' occurs in *Manusmṛti*[431] and the word '*pañcaratra*' also is found in the same work [432] Besides the words, '*trirātra*' and '*daśarātra*', are too well-known for their occurrence in the texts on *Dharmaśāstra* in the sense of the number of days during which pollution (*āśauca*) is to be observed.

It is significant that the word, '*rātri*', occurs in these compounds to justify the Hindu concept of the duration of a day which ends with the expiry of the night following it. The day therefore starts with dawn and ends with the night which is to be followed by the next dawn Thus, the word '*rātri*' means here 'day and night' (*ahorātra*) The compound thus formed conveys several senses For instance, the word '*trirātra*' means a period of pollution which covers three full days including nights, as in *Manusmṛti* The word '*pañcarātra*', later in the same work, means a period of five days. This word is repeated here. The king is required to fix the price of commodities at the expiry of this period, that, is once in five days. Here this word does not convey any specific sense except that of a group. The words, '*dvirātra*', '*trirātra*' and others which occur in the *Āpvstamba-śrauta-sūtra*, refer to the number of days during which specific sacrifices are to be performed.

429. *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, IV, 4. 69.
430. *Apastambaśrautasūtra*, XXII, 14
431. *MS*, V. 80.
432 *Ibid.* VIII, 402.

The words, '*ekarātrika*' and '*pāñcarātrika*', occur in the *Mahābhārata*,[433] where recluses are directed to stay for a day in villages and for five days in towns. These words are used in the very same sense in the *śloka* cited by the learned professor from the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṅgraha* (The professor, by the way, must have used the expression 'three nights' by oversight in the place of 'one night'.)

The word. '*pañcarātra*', has thus merely the sense of a group of five nights with no specific connotation attached to it, such as that of the period of stay for a recluse in a town or a period which should cover the performance of a sacred rite The *Mahābhārata* and *Ślokasangraha* use the words, '*pañcarātra*' and '*ekarātra*', in the sense only of duration of time They do not intend them to be the names of any groups of people If we are to conclude that the name '*pāñcarātrika*' was coined later on to denote itinerant reeluses, then '*ekarātrika*' could have also been coined, unless there is the suggestion that the recluses moved and stayed only in towns The word, '*Pāñcarātrika*', occurs in the *Harṣacarita*[434] of Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa in the sense of a particular group of persons professing particular doctrines and leading a specific way of life, as it is clear from the names of other groups in the context who could be identified from the practices and doctrines which they followed. This work was written in the first half of the 7th century A.D., that is, before Budhasvāmin (c 900 A D)

The farmer who refers, according to Budhasvāmin, to the restriction for the stay of the recluses, is not known as a '*pāñcarātrika*', but is referred to by that name The writer knew of the practice and custom of the recluses. That he became a Buddhist later, after visiting the places dear to the Hindus and

433. *Mbh Śānti*, CXC 3.

434. p. 237.

Buddhists, does not at once suggest that recluses who observed this principle of '*pāñcarātra*', must have been following the rule of five-nights, regardless of doctrinal allegianee This principle has been in vogue long before the rise of Buddhism. Nor does the name, '*vihāra*', given to the resting places built after the period of the Buddha for the stay of the Buddhist monks during the rainy season, deserve specific attention, The *vihāras* could have been built to house the itinerant recluses of Buddhism, but the rule, that the recluses should not travel during this period, is too well known under the name, '*Saṅkalpa*', or rather '*Cāturmāsya-sankalpa*'. The order of recluses and the principles governing their lives were not invented by the Buddha. In fact, he was an inheritor of Hindu ideals. He did not teach any new religious doctrine, but laid greater stress on some of the ethical doctrines which were already known to the people. Thus it seems that the learned professor's thesis cannot be accepted, as it is based on unverified principles and assumptions.

The sacrifice called '*Pañcarātra Sattra*' is already stated to have been the basis for the name of this *Āgama* The ritualistic aspect of this connotation of the word, '*pāñcarātra*', does not affect the name which the *Vaisnava Āgama* assumed later. There is parity between this aspect of the *Āgama* and that of the *Ṛgveda*. Both had only the ritualistic aspect at the beginning, Philosophical speculation arose later, both in the case of the *Vedas* and this *Agama* Authenticity cannot therefore be denied to this *Āgama*.

It is suggested that the non-*yajñic* aspect of this sacrifice should have been a later development under the influence of Buddhism and Jainism. This also is open to doubt. That is, there is the symbolic representation of the sacrifice in the *Pañcarātra-sattra*. This is intentional. Such a representation is found also in the passage of the *Chāndyoga Upaniṣad*[435] where

435, V. 18, 2.

the chest, hair and heart of the worshipper are imagined to be respectively the altar, *darbha* grass and the *Gārhapatya* fire Hence, the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* must not be taken to have introduced the symbolic representation of the sacrifice. The *Upaniṣad* is found to contain already this feature

As regards the replacement of the earlier *vyūha* of Nara, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa and Hari by the latter, it must be borne in mind that the *Ekāntidharma* is said to have disappeared several times and evolved again and again.[436] On the last occasion, which is identical with the rise of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition, a new *vyūha* was evolved in which the four manifestations of God find representation, allowing the mind and ego to have their due place in the scheme through their presiding deities

Thus, an explanation has to be given for the rise of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine, offering a twofold meaning for this name. One lies in the doctrines which were preached by Brahmā, Śiva, Indra, Nāga (or Bṛhaspati) and Ṛṣi. According to the other, the word '*pañca*' stands for an aggregate having the five limbs of *abhigamana*, *upādāna*, *ijyā*, *svādhyāya*, and *yoga* With reference to '*rātra*' which means '*ahorātra*', these five convey the sense that the daily routine should be divided into five parts having these names

The name '*Pāñcaratra*', in its latter significance, is applicable to the system with special reference to the practical side, that is, the rituals The words, '*ijyā*' and '*svādhyāya*', bring out the Vedic foundations on which this daily routine is based. It is to vindicate this aspect of the system that Vedānta Deśika wrote the *Pāñcarātra-rakṣā*.

Vide:

पञ्चकालव्यवस्थित्यै वेङ्कटेशविपश्चिता ।
श्रीपाञ्चरात्रसिद्धान्त व्यवस्थेयं समर्पिता ॥

(p 44, Adyar edn.)

436. *Mbh*, *Śānti* CCCCVIII.

The division of the full period of *ahorātra* is treated in the *Jayākhya-saṁhitā*[437], perhaps belonging to the oldest group among the *Pāñcarātra* works

That the ritualistic contents of the system could not be traced to a single source, must be admitted The *Pāñcarātra-sattra*, described in the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, provided the system with the concept of the period of five nights. In this sense, the classification by the name of the system gets justified. The greater significance, attached to this source, is due to the unassailed supremacy and overlordship of Viṣṇu. The system drew sufficient inspiration from this for its philosophical background. At the same time, the ritualistic aspect of this *sattra* is reflected in the treatment of the acts of Viṣṇu as having the nature of performing the sacred ritual as enjoined by the *Vedas* themselves However, how and when the classification of the daily routine into five parts arose cannot be proved with evidence Perhaps the five parss of the day, *prātaḥ*, *saṁgava*, *madhyāhna*, *aparāhna* and *sāyam* as named in the *Dharmaśāstras*,[438] influenced a similar attempt at diurnal division for the purpose of worshipping God

In this context, it is necessary to criticise the following statement of Prof Hazra "It is more reasonable to hold that the original non-Vedic as well as anti-Vedic ideas of the *Pāñcarātras* were permeated through the *Saṁhitās*[439]" It is unfortunate that many Indian scholars have been encouraged to hold views such as these, under the influence of the Western Orientalists Ideas and practices such as these could be held as non-Vedic, as they do not form part of the contents of the *Vedas*. There is, however, no justification to

437. *JS*. ch. XXII *Pārs*. IX. 161-178

438. Aparārka on *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, pp. 464.

439 *Upapurāṇas*, p. 110.

treat them as anti-Vedic. No idea or practice that is found in the *Pāñcarātra* could be proved as opposed to the teachings of the *Vedas* That is, the *Vedas* do not contain any doctrine or enjoin any practice which is contradicted in the *Āgamas*. The latter do not preach doctrines or prescribe any practices which condemn particular Vedic injunctions. Many of the recensions of the *Vedas* are lost. The *Mīmāṁsā* system agrees to treat the *Smṛti* texts as authoritative to uphold certain practices which find no mention in the *Veda*.[440] On this ground, the *Smṛti* texts are not held to be anti-Vedic.

The sources for the *Āgamic* practices could be traced to those of people in certain parts of the country and confined to them alone The *Kalpa-sūtras* support the authenticity of such practices and their adoption [441] Those who have taken to practices not traceable to the *Vedas* and *Smṛtis*, are not stated anywhere as having preached anti-Vedic doctrines.

From time immemorial, Hindu society has been dynamic and progressive. While the externals of the practices remained unchanged, internal changes were allowed to take place, as is clear from statements recorded in the *Dharmaśāstra* texts which seem to have contradictions and inconsistencies The division of Hindu society into Vedic and aboriginal was made by Western scholars with the sole intention of underrating the worth of the Vedic texts and suggesting that the aborigines did not have an inferior cultural background The attention of the readers is drawn to the introductory chapter of this work, where Hindu

440. *Tantravārttikā* on I. 3 2.

441 P. V Kane · *History of 'Dharmaśāstra'*, III. pp 848-855
Cf. *Bhāratīya Vidyā*, VI. pp. 27-30

अथ खलूच्चावचा जनपदधर्मा ग्रामधर्माश्च तान् विवाहे प्रतीयात् ।
Āśvalāyana Gṛhya-sūtra, I. 5. 1.

Cf. *Bodhāyana Dharma-sūtra*, I. 1. 19, 20.

society is shown to have been advanced in progress and civilization in very early days, It is needless to believe in a cleavage of Hindu society as postulated by the Western Orientalists and their Indian followers. Hindu society has been culturally one and the same, having provision for diversity at various levels of thought and practice

It must be thus conceded that there are no anti-Vedic ideas and practices in the *Āgamas*. Non-Vedic ones are, however, there, as the *Vedas* are not to be looked upon as an encyclopaedia treating of all aspects of the life of society Many concepts and practices should have been in vogue even with people professing Vedic culture, that were not recorded in the *Vedas*. On this ground, the *Āgamas*, which deal with them, could not be treated as non-Vedic or anti-Vedic.

The same explanation holds good for the philosophical background of the *Āgamas* which arose with explanations for rituals The schools of *Vedānta*, which drew inspiration from the Nyāya and Sāṅkhya doctrines, changed those borrowed materials to suit their needs. The same feature is found in the *Āgamas* The Sānkhya doctrines, preached in the *Mokṣadharma* section of the *Mahābhārata*, were changed to suit the *Āgama* doctrines in the *Pāñcarātra Samhitās*.

The *Pāñcarātra Āgama* regards Visnu with Śrī as the Ultimate Reality. For the purposes of creation and for worship, Viṣṇu manifests Himself in three forms called Saṅkarṣana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. It is said that Visnu is Vāsudeva from whom arises Saṅkarṣaṇa standing for the self From Saṅkarsana arises Pradyumna representing the mind. From Pradyumna arises Aniruddha representing the ego (*ahaṁkāra*).[442] All these constitute the fourfold *vyūha* There are the divine descents called

442. *Mbh*, *Śānti*, CCCXLVII. 32-40.

avatāras of the Lord which are also enshrined in temples. The Lord is also present everywhere inside all living beings as *antaryāmin* The self will have to devote itself to the observance of the five daily duties, such as *abhigamana* and *upādāna*. Worship is to be done both in the temple and in the house. Such is in brief what this *Āgama* teaches.

The authority of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* has been questioned by adherents of different faiths The question of validity in the case of the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* is not so serious, as it is based exclusively on the *Vedas*. Even if Vikhanas is not held to be Brahmā,[443] the authority of the *Āgama* tradition known by his name cannot be questioned, for he himself was a Vedic seer and his doctrines are hence valid. The same cannot be said of the *Pāñcarātra* Though expounded by Nārāyaṇa Himself who is identified with Visnu[444], it cannot be readily admitted as intrinsically valid like the *Vedas* which are not the work of any author or authors, human or divine

The main ground for any objection of this kind is that the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines are not only not based on Vedic authority, but preach many a practice which is pronouncedly anti-Vedic The *Kūrmapurāṇa* mentions this system as one among others which are outside the pale of Vedic culture and so deserving rejection.[445] Medātithi on *Manu* (X 22) has a similar remark on this system.

443 Vide

ये नखा ते वैखानसाः ।

Taittirīya Āranyaka (I 23)

Brahmā, who was performing penance, shook his body The *Vaikhānasas* arose from his nails. The word '*Vaikhānasa*' is from '*Vikhanas*' which illustrates the phonetic change of metathesis.

444 *Mbh. Śānti* CCCLIX. 95-68.

445. See under fn. 163.

Again, the adherents of the system adopt, in addition to the Vedic *mantras*, the *tāntrika* ones also All the sacramental practices (*samskāras*) beginning from impregnation (*niseka*) are governed by their own doctrines. For them, the *Dvādaśākṣara mantra* is everything. Neither the *Gāyatrī* is recommended nor utilised, nor Vedic study, *japa* and other works enjoined in the Vedic tradition undertaken

Vide

एकाध्वना निषेकादि संस्काराश्च बलादिभिः ।
द्वादशाक्षरविद्यैव तेषां विद्या न त्रयी ॥
न सावित्री न मन्त्रेभ्यः स्वाध्यायजपकर्म च ।
ये पुनः सावित्र्यनुवचनप्रभृति त्रयीधर्मपरित्यागेनैकायन-
श्रुतिविहितानेव संस्कारान् कुर्वन्ति ।

Āgamaprāmāṇya, p 78.

Secondly, the *pañcasamskāra* is considered as a sacrament necessary for initiation (*dīkṣā*) for any one to get qualified for offering worship to God. Brāhmaṇas, Ksatriyas and Vaiśyas can get initiated into Vedic study through the *upanayana* The *Pāñcarātra* tradition prescribes the *pañcasamskāra* both for those who are *dvijas* (twice-born) and for those (Śūdras and women) who are not eligible to have the *upanayana*

Vide –

ब्राह्मणै क्षत्रियै वैश्यैः शूद्रैश्च कृतलक्षणै· ।
अर्चनीयश्च सेव्यश्च नित्ययुक्तैः स्वकर्मसु ॥
सात्वतं विधिमास्थाय गीतः संकर्षणेन यः ।
द्वापरस्य युगस्यान्ते आदौ कलियुगस्य च ॥

Mbh· Bhīṣma LXVI,39, 40.

The word, '*kṛtalakṣana*' in the first line quoted above must be taken to mean one who has obtained marks of identity, and so must refer to one who gets identified as a Sāttvata by having the *pañcasaṃskāra* · '*ca*' in '*Śūdraiśca*' can imply women, for women

are not denied the *pañcasaṃskāra*. Thus, an additional or specific initiation is enjoined by this *Āgama* as obligatory, while the Vedic tradition does not prescribe any such thing

Thirdly, as a corollary of this *pañcasaṃskāra* initiation, it follows that those who are otherwise totally disqualified for understanding the act of worshipping God get adequate qualification The *upanayana* is not enjoined for those who are not twice-born. On these grounds, it is evident that the *Pāñcarātra* tradition lays down rules for practices which can be claimed to go against the Vedic tradition.

But if Nārāyaṇa Himself has expounded such doctrines going against the Vedic tradition, how can He be justified in doing so, as He is thus contradicting His own statements :–

श्रुतिस्स्मृती ममैवाज्ञा ।

Visnudharma 6.31

"The *Vedas* and *Smrtis* are only My commandments"

वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यः ।

BG (XV 15)

"I alone am to be known through all the *Vedas*"

It is not possible to believe that the Lord would have preached the *Pāñcarātra* contradicting Vedic tenets

Fourthly, another argument against the *Pāñcarātra* system is set out in the *Utpattyasambhavādhikaraṇa* of the *Brahmasūtras*. This section contains the following *sūtras* —[446]

उत्पत्त्यसंभवात् । (II 2 39)

न च कर्तुः करणम् । (II 2 40)

विज्ञानादिभावे वा तदप्रतिषेधः । (II.2.41)

विप्रतिषेधाच्च । (II.2 42)

446. The *Brahmasūtras* given here are numbered as 42 to 45 according to to the *Śrībhāṣya* of Rāmānuja.

The *Āgama* declares that the self called Saṁkarṣana is born of Vāsudeva, the mind called Pradyumna from Saṁkarsaṇa and the ego called Aniruddha from Pradyumna.

Vide :

परमकारणात् परब्रह्मभूताद्वासुदेवात् संकर्षणो नाम जीवो जायते, संकर्षणात् प्रद्युम्नसंज्ञं मनो जायते, तस्मादनिरुद्धसंज्ञो ऽहंकार जायत इति ।

Śrībhāṣya on II.2. 39.

The self has neither birth nor death

Vide :

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचित् ।

(*Katha Upanisad*. I. 2. 18)

In the *Āgama* passage cited above, the self is stated to have birth Hence the *Āgama* of the *Pāñcarātra* system cannot be valid. This is conveyed in the *Sūtra* (II 2. 39) cited above.

That the mind called Pradyumna arises out of the self named Saṅkarsana cannot be admitted, because the breath, mind and all the sense organs are stated to spring from *Brahman*.

Vide :

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनस्सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।

Mundaka Upanisad (II 1 3)

The self which is the agent cannot be the source for the mind. This objection to the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine that admits the rise of the mind from the self is conveyed in the *Sūtra* (II. 2 40)

If the adherents of the *Pāñcarātra* system seek to interpret the rise of the self and mind as stated in II 2. 39, by taking Saṅkarsaṇa and Pradyumna as Vāsudeva Himself in His essential characteristic of knowledge, the impossibility of origination is not contradicted, that is, the objection stands undisturbed. If all the four represent only Vāsudeva, the rise of one from another cannot be admitted as also the plurality of the divine manifestations. This is the sense of the *Sūtras*, II. 2. 42-45..

Fifthly, the *Pāñcarātra* position prescribing idol worship stands contradicted on the strength of the Vedic passages which prescribe the ways of obtaining release. The Supreme Reality is to be meditated upon.

Vide :

आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः ।
(*BrU*. II. 4. 5)

(O! the self is to be seen, listened to, reflected upon and contemplated upon.)

The *pranava* must be meditated upon.

Vide :

ओमित्येतदक्षरमुद्गीथमुपासीत ।
(*ChU* I. 1, 1)

(One must meditate upon the *Sāma* chanting of the syllable '*Om*')

These four *sūtras* together form an argument directed against the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* system

Sixthly, Śāndilya, it is said, learnt the *Vedas*, *Itihāsas*, *Purānas* and all other subjects required to be studied. He could not find, from what he had learnt, the final means to get what was good for him. He felt miserable at this[447] He prayed to God who gave him the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines

Vide :

अधीता भगवान् वेदास्साङ्गोपाङ्गास्सविस्तराः ।
श्रुतानि मया अङ्गानि वाकोवाक्ययुतानि च
न चैतेषु समस्तेषु संशयेन विना क्वचित् ।
श्रेयोमार्गं प्रपश्यामि येन सिद्धिर्भविष्यति ॥ (*ParS* I.3-4)

447 This bears close likeness to the treatment of a similar theme in the *Bhūmavidyā-prakarana* in *ChU* (VII 1).

वेदान्तेषु यथासारं संगृह्य भगवान् हरिः ।
भक्तानुकम्पया विद्वान् संचिक्षेप यथासुखम् ॥[448]

The foregoing passages reveal that Śāndilya had doubts as to the utility of studying various subjects. He could get full satisfaction only from the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines This attitude of Śāndilya questions the usefulness of Vedic study and, as such, the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines should be considered as anti-Vedic, thus losing their validity.

Seventhly, the *Pāñcarātra* system is not included in the traditional list of subjects studied

Vide –

पुराणन्यायमीमांसा धर्मशास्त्राङ्गमिश्रिताः ।
वेदाः स्थानानि विद्यानां धर्मस्य च चतुर्दश ॥

Yājñavalkya Smṛti (I.3)

Eighthly, the *Pāñcarātra* system is called *Sāttvata.* What does this word mean ? It is a system belonging to the Sāttvatas, who are said to belong to a particular community called Vaiśya-Vrātya which includes Sāttvata, Sudhanvā, Ācarya and others [449]

Those who are devoted to worshipping an idol and earning thereby their livelihood, are called *Devalakas* Those who do this work for livelihood without initiation are *Karmadevalakas* and those with initiation are *Katpadevalakas.* Both are unfit for any responsible work in religious rites They are to be kept at a distance from enlightened society There are two more kinds of

448 Rāmānuja mentions this in continuation of the previous *ślokas* cited from the *PaiS* I 3-4 Sudarsanasūri notes that this *śloka* is the one following I 3-4, but it is not found in the present text of *ParS* I 3-4

Vide .

अधीता भगवन् वेदा इत्यादिश्लोकानामुत्तरश्लोकोऽयं
वेदान्तेषु यथासारमिति ।

(*Śrutaprakāśikā* on II. 2. 42.)

449 *MS* X 23 See Medhātithi on *Ibid.* X. 22, 23

Devalakas, all of whom are not considered to be real Brahmins. In fact, they are treated as outcastes.[450]

Ninthly, what is offered to the deity, whether flowers or food, must not be taken by any one and must be thrown away in water. Acts of expiation are prescribed for taking such offerings which are called technically *nirmālya* [451]

Vide :

निवेदितं यद्द्रव्यं पुष्पं फलमथापि वा ।
तन्निर्माल्यमिति प्रोक्तं तत्प्रयत्नेन वर्जयेत् ॥

*SKS Śivarātra.V.*48,49.

The name '*Sāttvata*', the description of *Devalaka* as a priest for worship and the practice of taking *nirmālya* prove that the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* deserves severe condemnation and so is totally invalid.

Finally, the derogatory expressions found in the *Vaikhānasa* texts against the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* and in those of the *Pāñcarātra* against the *Vaikhānasa* are to be taken into account while considering the question of validity. The *Vaikhānasa* which is based on the authority of the *Vedas*, should be considered as not only valid, but also ancient The *Pāñcarātra Āgama*, it is argued, must therefore be treated as later in origin and unauthoritative.

450. *Āgamaprāmāṇya*, p 8

451 Vide ·

विष्णो निवेदितं शुद्धं मुनिभि र्भोज्यमुच्यते ।
अन्यन्निवेद्यं निर्माल्यं भुक्त्वा चान्द्रायणं चरेत् ॥

cited in *SR*. p 82 as taken from the *Brahmapurāṇa*

Cf *Pars* XII 36b, 37a, VII 44a for the *prima facie* view See Das gupta S. N *History of Indian Philosophy* III ch XVI for an account of objections of this kind

The *Vaikhānasa* texts frequently refer to the *Pāñcarātra* practices as non-Vedic, *tāntrika* and as harmful to the people. The *Vaikhānasa* system is claimed to have been taught formerly to Vikhanas by Nārāyana Yājñavalkya and others introduced into it the *mantras* of the *Ekāyana* recension when there was some danger to the system

The *Vaikhānasa* is called *Saumya* and the *Pāñcarātra*, *Āgneya*. The latter was revealed by Vāsudeva to safeguard the former. The former must be adopted for offering worship in villages and cities, in palaces and private houses The latter should be confined to forests, hills, the seashore, banks of rivers and the confluence of holy rivers and the sea. That system which was adopted at first for excavating the ground for the construction of the temple must be continued to be adopted for subsequent purposes. The other system should not be brought in on any account

Vide

आदौ यत्तन्त्रमाश्रित्य कृतं वै कर्षणादिकम् ।
तेन कुर्यात्प्रतिष्ठान्तं न कुर्यात्तन्त्रसंकरम् ॥

SA LXXVIII II

If an attempt is made to mix up one with the other, the kingdom or administration of the locality will suffer[452] If an adherent of the *tāntrika* system touches the idol or enters the *sanctum sanctorum* of the *Vaikhānasas*, reinstallation and reconsecration must be done according to the *Vaikhānasa* system. If the *Vaikhānasa* mode is to be adopted in a temple which is based on the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*, there is no harm. But the reverse will be attended with grave consequences Those who meddle with the *Vaikhānasa* mode would go to hell.[453]

452 *SA*. LXXVIII 2-12, *VK* 77

453. *SA*, LXXVIII, 18-24.

A person who offers worship to an idol, whether of Śiva or Viṣṇu, through the *tantrika* mode is a *Devalaka*. That country will be prosperous where the *Vaikhānasa* system is adopted. Any other system, when followed, will not yield any result. The Lord is stated to favour the *Vaikhānasa* method and to like only the *Vaikhānasas* who are His own sons, while those who follow the practice of initiation are His adopted sons.[454]

The *Pāñcarātrā* texts too do not favour the mixing up of the practices enjoined by them with those of the *Vaikhānasa* texts.

Vide ·

यद्बिम्बं येन शास्त्रेण समारब्धं पुरा द्विज ।
प्रासादं वा ततस्तेन शास्त्रेणैव तदर्चयेत् ॥
तच्छास्त्रमन्तरेणैव यो यजेदन्यवर्त्मना ।
राज्ञो राष्ट्रस्य कर्तुश्च विनाशं कर्तुमिच्छति ॥
न कदाचिदपि प्राज्ञः प्रकुर्याच्छास्त्रसङ्करम् ।
शास्त्रसङ्करदोषेणैव महान् दोषो भवेद्ध्रुवम् ॥

(cited from the *Kālottara* in *PR* p, 100)

The *Vaikhānasa* system is severely condemned as yielding misfortune, and as ugly and impure. This mode is there to be replaced by the *Pañcarātra* system.[455] In general, the rejection of the *Vaikhānasa* mode of worship and the rules for purification, if the temple and the system of worship are connected with their priests or practices, are found treated in most of the *Saṃhitās* of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* under the heading of *Prāyaścitta*.

454 *Ibid* LXXVIII, 25-27, cf. *ibid* 36, 37 LXXVIII, 62b-64, *KĀ*. XXXVI 32-35, 36, 37, 45

455. Vide

ननु च वैखानससूत्रानुसारिषु काश्यपमरीचिभार्गवात्रेयेषु शास्त्रेषु तदनुबन्धिषु चाधिकारग्रन्थेषु संग्रहविस्तररूपेषु भगवत्प्रतिष्ठार्चनादिकं पूर्णमुपदिशत्सु किं पञ्चरात्रेण ?

PR. p. 101.

However, the *Saṁhitās* called *Ratnatraya*, namely, *Pauṣkara*, *Jayākhyā* and *Sāttvata*, do not have such insulting references to the *Vaikhānasa* system.

When the idol in a temple where the *Pāñcarātra* mode is followed is touched by the followers of the *Vaikhānasa* tradition, the idol is to be bathed in milk. It requires re-installation according to the *Pāñcarātra* mode.

Vide

वैखानसैस्तु संस्पृष्टे पयःस्नानेन शुध्यति ।
आराधितं स्वमार्गेण प्रतिष्ठामाचरेत्पुनः ॥

PārS. XIX. 373.374.

Offering the bath to the deity is of different kinds. "The worst of the lowest kind" will have to be offered when the idol is touched by women or those who have not had *upanayana* or the *Vaikhānasa* Brahmins or those who are not Vaiṣṇavas. *Homas* to pacify the evil influence will have to follow.

Vide

स्त्रीभिर्वानुपनीतैर्वा तथा वैखानसैर्द्विजैः ।
अवैष्णवैर्वा संस्पृष्टे बिम्बे त्वधमाधमम् ।
स्नपनं बिधिवत्कृत्य शान्तिहोमादिकं चरेत् ॥

IS XIX 135b, 136.

The *Pāñcarātra* system must, on no account, be replaced by any other system of worship The *Vaikhānasa* mode of worship is stated to be opposed to the *Pāñcarātra* system

Vide

यद्यदिष्टतमं लोके पूर्वसिद्धान्ताविरोधि तत् ।
प्रतिग्राह्यमतोऽन्योन्यविरुद्धं संत्यजेद्बुधः
वैखानसेषु तन्त्रेषु शैवपाशुपतेषु च ।
विहितान्यत्र जातानि विरुद्धानीति किं पुनः ॥
पञ्चरात्रविधानेन पूज्यमाने प्रतिष्ठिते ।
नान्येन पूजनं कार्यं विदुषापि कदाचन ॥

PārS. XIX. 548-550.

A priest who has had initiation in a temple according to a particular system, must not attend to excavating the ground and other acts according to another It is not proper for one who is a teacher or priest to change the system of which he is a follower

Vide ·

एकत्र दीक्षितस्तन्त्रे सिद्धान्ते वा द्विजोत्तमः ।
क्रियां न कुर्यादन्यत्र कर्षणादींश्चतुर्मुख ॥
आचार्यकमथार्त्विज्यं पूजाद्यं मधुद्विषः ।
तन्त्रभेदे च सिद्धान्तभेदे चापि न युज्यते ॥

PāS. IV 19 131–2

The *Vaikhānasa* system and those of the Saivas are declared as non-Vedic and as not benign (*asaumya*), while the *Pāñcarātra* is *saumya*. Hence worship should not be according to these modes.

Vide .

शैववैखानसाभ्यां चार्चयेन्न कदाचन ।
वैखानसस्य शैवस्यावैदिकत्वान्मुनीश्वर ॥
शैवं वैखानसं चाप्यसौम्यं तदुदाहृतम् ।
सौम्यं तु सात्वतं चैव तस्मात्सौम्यं विशिष्यते ॥

VīS XXXIX.279,280

The *Pāñcarātra* system is stated to be the reverse of this in the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*.

Vide

सौम्यं वैखानसं प्रोक्तमाग्नेयं पाञ्चरात्रकम् ।

SA. LXXVIII.5b.

The *Pāñcarātra* mode of installation of the deity is enjoined even when the preliminary rites are performed in accordance with the *Vaikhānasa* or Śaiva mode

Vide ;

कर्षणादिकृतं पूर्वं वैखानसविधानतः ॥
पञ्चरात्रेण शास्त्रेण स्थापयेत् पुरुषोत्तमम् ।

शैववैखानसाभ्यां तु विधिना वास्तुसंग्रहम् ॥
तद्देशे स्थापयेद्देवं सात्त्वतेन विधानतः ।

VtS.XXXIX.275b–277a.

At the same time, it is stated that the two must not be mixed up with each other.

Vide·

तस्मात् सर्वप्रयत्नेन न कुर्यात्तन्त्रसंकरम् ।

Ibid.285b

The *Vaikhānasa* system is stated to have been expounded by Bhārgava (Bhṛgu or his descendants) for the well-being of the *Vaikhānasas* This must not be adopted by the twice-born either for their private or public worship.

Vide

वैखानसहितार्थाय शास्त्रं भार्गवनिर्मितम् ।
नानुष्ठेयं द्विजश्रेष्ठैरात्मनोऽर्थे परस्य च ॥

Ibid 289b–290a

Those who take to the *vānaprastha* order are stated to be of two kinds, namely, *Vaikhānasas* and *Sūtas* The latter offer worship according to the *Āgama* taught by Bhārgava Bhrgu, it is said, expounded this *Āgama* for the *pratilomas*.[456]

Vide

एते वैखानसाः प्रोक्ताः भार्गवागमपूजकाः ।
प्रतिलोमहितार्थाय भृगुणा तन्त्रमीरितम् ॥

VtS XXXIX 295.

The systems of *Pāñcarātra* and *Vaikhānasa* must not be mixed up as this would lead to total destruction

Vide

एतेषां संकरं तत्र वर्ज्यमाहुर्मनीषिणः ।
तन्त्रसंकरदोषेण सर्वं नश्यत्यसंशयः ॥

Ibid.297.

456 One is said to be a *pratiloma* in social status, if he is born of a higher caste woman and a man of lower caste.

In many respects, the *Āgamas* differ from each other, and so diverse results happen when the practices prescribed by them are adopted. The deities who are installed by the procedures of different *Āgamas*, would get enraged when the ways of worship get mixed up, and would bring ruin to the worshippers

Vide

> सात्त्वतं सर्ववृद्ध्यर्थं शैवं सर्वविनाशकृत् ।
> वैखानसमनर्थार्थं तस्मात्तत्परिवर्जयेत् ॥
> अस्थानस्थापिताः केचित् स्वस्थानवर्जिताः ।
> दैवताद्वयकोपेन सर्वं नश्यत्यसंशयः ॥

Ibid 302,303.

Elaborate rules of expiation are prescribed when the practices of the *Pāñcarātra* system get mixed up with those of the *Vaikhānasa*.[457]

Thus, both the *Vaikhānasa* and the *Pāñcarātra Agamas* prohibit the adoption of the practices prescribed in each other. On this ground, it is contended, the *Vaikhānasa* is held to be valid, leading to the declaration of the *Pāñcarātra Āgamas* as lacking authority.

Right from Yāmunācārya who wrote the *Agama-prāmānya* defending the validity of the *Pāñcarātra*, scholars have been putting forth fresh grounds to maintain it.

The *Pāñcarātra* system was revealed by Nārāyana Himself

Vide ·

> पाञ्चरात्रस्य कृत्स्नस्य वक्ता नारायणः स्वयम् ।

Mbh Śānti CCCLIX 68a

> इदं महोपनिषदं चतुर्वेदसमन्वितम् ।
> सांख्ययोगकृतं तेन पाञ्चरात्रानुशब्दितम् ॥
> नारायणमुखोद्गीर्णं नारदोऽश्रावयत्पुनः ॥

Ibid. CCCLVIII.62,63a

457. *VIS* XXXIX

Nārāyana is stated here to be only the 'speaker' (or expounder) and not the author of the *Pāñcarātra*. It is a great *Upaniṣad* related to all the four *Vedas* and built up by *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga*. When the Supreme Being is mentioned here as the 'speaker', the validity of this *Āgama* cannot be questioned. The *Ekāyana* recension is claimed to have been the basis for the development of the system This is said to be the root of the big tree of the *Vedas*, of which the *Rk* and others are the branches[458] Of course this recension is now lost The question does not therefore rise about its validity, much less whether that validity is intrinsic or otherwise Thus, the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* is as valid as the *Vedas* are held to be.

The *Pāñcarātra Āgama* is thus based on the contents of the *Vedas* It is pro-Vedic, not because Vedic *mantras* are frequently cited for the rituals, but also because its *tāntrika mantras* are based on Vedic passages[459] Certain *Gāyatrī mantras*[460] are found evolved out of the Vedic *Sāvitrī* and included as part of Vedic passages. This adaptation of the Vedic pattern is followed in *Pāñcarātra Āgama* and therefore cannot make it anti-Vedic

The practices of a sacramental character are not non-Vedic, but are based on the *Pāñcarātra* tradition which in turn is based on the *Ekāyana* recension The ceremonial practices of the *Pāñcarātra* system are exclusively based on this recension and do not deserve condemnation, as is the case with the practices of the *Vaikhānasa* system which are based on the *Vaikhānasa-sutra*.

With reference to the practice of *pañcasamskāra* enjoined by *Pāñcarātra* tradition, it must be said that while the *Vaikhānasa*

458 *PāS* I 1 56 *PārS* I 76 The *Ekāyana* recension is included in the *ChU* VII 1 2

459 Cf. *Omgūm ganapataye namah* is based on *Om ganapataye namah* (*LT* XXXIII 63)

460 *Nārāyana Upanisad*, 5, 6, 7

tradition recognizes mere birth in the family of the Brahmins who belong to the *Vaikhānasa-sūtra* as itself a qualification for its members (who have had *upanayana*) for worshipping God ceremonially, the *Pāñcarātra* system prescribes an initiation in the form of *pañcasamskāra* With the liberal intention of permitting every person, irrespective of caste and sex, to worship God personally, this act of initiation is enjoined The procedure of *pañcasaṃskāra* is not *Vedic*, but its practice has sufficient *Vedic* authority. Vedic *mantras* are used and the procedure is on the lines of the *Kalpasūtras* This is not a proof for the *Āgama's* non-Vedic character. The *pañcasaṃskāra* is the only initiation (*dīkṣā*) for the Śūdras and women and a second one for those who have had *upanayana* Such initiation is not an anti-Vedic practice in the case of the twice-born, for a special initiation[461] is ordained even for those who have had *upanayana* for performing certain *Vedic* rites.[462] This is also called '*yajñadīksā*.'

Vide·

मातुरग्रेऽधिजननं द्वितीयं मौञ्जिबन्धने ।
तृतीय यज्ञदीक्षायां द्विजस्य श्रुतिचोदनात् ॥

MS II. 169

With this special initiation, the Ksatriya and Vaiśya are declared to have become Brāhmaṇas.

Vide:

ब्राह्मणो वा एष जायते यो दीक्षते ।
तस्माद्राजन्यवैश्यावपि ब्राह्मण इत्यावेदयति ॥

Āpastamba Śrauta X 11 5-6

The *pañcasaṃskāra* makes one who receives it Vaisṇava, which Vyāsa calls *krtalakṣana*. Thus the second initiation is not enjoined by the *Āgama* only It is taken to have been inspired by the *Srauta* practice.

461 Special initiation is ordained only for these who get a general kind of initiation For details, see P. V. Kane, *History of Dharma Sastra*, Vol. II, Part 2, pp. 1137-40.

The charge which is levelled against the *Pāñcarātra* that those who are not qualified for the *upanayana* are also given this initiation and declared qualified for worshipping God, cannot be sustained The *rathakāra*, who does not belong to any of the first three castes and is not entitled to the *upanayana*, is permitted by the *Śrautasūtras*, to consecrate the Vedic fire.[462] Similarly, permission is given to the *niṣādasthapati*, who is not also qualified, to have the *upanayana* to perform sacrifices such as the *Agnihotra* and *Darśapūrṇamāsa*[463] It is also curious to note that the *rathakāra*, who is held to be not qualified to the *upanayana*, is allowed to have it under certain circumstances When viewed dispassionately, one can see the growing tendency of a liberal and broad-minded attitude in extending the application of the rules of the *Kalpasūtras* This is not conservatism, but progress. It is this tendency that is witnessed in the *Pāñcarātra Agama*.

That the *Pāñcarātra* tradition is not anti-Vedic becomes evident from the creation of the *tāntrika mantras* No attempt is made to stretch the rules of the *Kalpasūtras* beyond limits and deprive them of their sanctity and individuality. The *tāntrika mantras* are not really Vedic, but they could be treated as *mantras* There are instances of even ordinary non-Vedic passages having been elevated to the level of *mantras*. Such passages find their place in the *Vaikhānasa*[464] texts also which are held to be Vedic to the core. The objections against the *Pāñcarātra* tradition which are noticed in the *Kūrmapurāṇa* and elsewhere should have been raised with a view to safeguard the Vedic traditions from getting mixed up with *tāntrika* ones.

462 Eg, *Dīkṣaṇīyeṣṭi* cf *LT*, Introduction. p 14.

463 See note under fn, 133.

464 Vide

वाराहं वरदं महीधरं वज्रदंष्ट्रिणम्

VK, p. 368 Cf, *SA* XXXVI *PāS*, IV, 13, 137-143

When God declared that *Śruti* and *Smṛti* are His commandments and that He could be known only through the *Vedas*, what is meant is that the *Vedas* are of supreme validity and the *Smṛti* comes next to them when it does not clash with their authority. Otherwise, the epics, *Purāṇas* and the host of kindred works would have to be treated as of no authority Like the *Āgama* which was taught to his disciples by Vikhanas on the basis of the teachings of the *Vedas*, the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* too was revealed by God Himself to sages and, as Vyāsa put it, this *Āgama*, revealed by God, represents the quintessence of the *Upanisads* The validity of both the *Āgamas* cannot therefore be questioned.

The *Utpattyasambhavādhikaraṇa* forms part of the second chapter of the *Brahmasūtras* called *Avirodhādhyāya* Here it is shown that the concept of *Brahman* as developed in the first chapter cannot be controverted by any concept of any other system whatsoever. This must imply that this *adhikarana* dealing with the *Pāñcarātra* system, should be interpreted to prove that it is not authoritative This is claimed to be pre-supposed by the author of the *Brahmasūtras*.

The view of Śankara on this *adhikaraṇa* is contained in his *Brahmasūtrabhāsya*, which is the earliest available commentary. He interprets the *sūtras* here as refuting the view of the *Pāñcarātra* system, that the self called Sankarsaṇa is born out of the Supreme Being, Vāsudeva. His objection is directed only against this doctrine. He admits openly that the other aspects of this *Āgama* are not refuted.

Vide

योऽसौ नारायणः परोऽव्यक्तात् प्रसिद्धः परमात्मा सर्वात्मा स आत्मनात्मानमनेकधा व्यूह्यावस्थित तन्न निराक्रियते । (II. 2. 43)

This is because the *Upaniṣads* recognise this self-manifestation [465]

अभिगमनाद्याराधनं न प्रतिषिध्यते (*Ibid.*) 2. 2. 42.

465. *ChU.* VII. 26. 2.

Nor is there any objection to worship as prescribed by *Abhigamana*. Even if Saṁkarsaṇa and others are to be treated as gods, then there will be four gods to be recognized which goes against the *Pāñcarātra* tradition that Vāsudeva is the only one Supreme Deity. If they are qualities, namely, knowledge etc., then this amounts to treating, for example, the same 'Sankarṣaṇa' as a person and also as his quality. This position is inadmissible. Besides, Śāṇdilya is stated to have given up the study of the *Vedas* and taken to that of the *Pāñcarātra* system. This goes against the authority of the *Vedas*.

From this, it appears that Śaṅkara is not against the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* as such, except for the doctrine that the self, Samkarṣaṇa, arose from Vāsudeva. From the name of the *adhikarana* and the first *sūtra* there, it seems that the entire objection against the *Pāñcarātra* tradition is based upon this contention only.

The Viśistādvaita thinkers treat this *adhikaraṇa* as conveying not merely the objection to the *Pāñcarātra* tradition, but also the answer in favour of its validity. The first two *sūtras* represent the *prima facie* view and the next two show that the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* is valid. There are certain *adhikaraṇas*[466] in the *Brahmasūtras* which are of this kind in containing both the objection and answer for the particular concepts or theories treated therein.

The first *sūtra* (II.2 39) which refutes the statement of the *Āgama* that the self in the form of Saṁkarṣaṇa is born, is based on wrong premises: for this *Āgama* does not state anywhere

466. '*Adhikaraṇa*' is thus defined.—

विषयो विशयश्चैव पूर्वपक्षस्तथोत्तरम् ।
निर्णयश्चेति पञ्चाङ्गं शास्त्रेऽधिकरणं स्मृतम् ॥

Śabdakalpadruma I. p. 37.

Cf. *Jñādhikarana* II. 3. 19-42, *Sambandhādhikaraṇa* III, 3, 20-22; *Sāmparāyadhikaraṇa* III, 3, 27-31,

that the self is born, but emphatically declares that the soul is eternal The statements made in the *Āgama* text that the self, mind and ego are born must be taken to mean that the deities presiding over these are born. Besides, this *Agama* passage must be interpreted like the *Upaniṣad* passage[467] which says that he who has no birth is born in several ways By 'birth' self-manifestation is meant It does not mean that the mind and ego are produced from the self as stated in the *sūtra* II 2.40, for all these are stated to be produced from *Brahman* [468]

The *sūtras*, II 2 41-42, could be taken to convey the *siddhānta* view According to the *sūtra* 41, the objection to the statement that the self, Saṁkarṣaṇa, was born of Vāsudeva, cannot stand, as Vāsudeva and the other three are only of the nature of knowledge and the origin (of the world). That is, these four are only *Brahman* which is knowledge and which represents the original cause of the world. The words, 'self', 'mind' and 'ego', denote Saṁkarṣaṇa, and others who manifest themselves in particular forms. Hence the question of the self getting birth does not arise. The very same *Āgama* text which states that the self, Samkarṣaṇa, is born of Vāsudeva and the mind, Pradyumna, from the self, declares that matter and the self are inseparably connected with each other and that the self is known definitely to be beginningless and endless.

467 *Taittirīya Āranyaka* III 13 1,

468 Vide ·

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनस्सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च (*MU* II. 1. 3)

Also यो वासुदेवो भगवान् क्षेत्रज्ञो निर्गुणात्मकः ।
ज्ञेयः स एव राजेन्द्र जीवः संकर्षणः प्रभुः ॥

संकर्षणाच्च प्रद्युम्नो मनोभूतः स उच्यते ।
प्रद्युम्नाद्योऽनिरुद्धस्तु सोऽहंकारः स ईश्वरः ॥
(*Mbh.* *Śānti*, CCCXLVIII, 39, 40.)

Vide :-

व्याप्तिरूपेण संबन्धस्तस्याश्च पुरुषस्य च ।
स ह्यनादिरनन्तश्च परमार्थेन निश्चितः ॥

Pars. II. 19.

This passage runs counter to the one which refers to the birth of the self, and so the latter passage should be taken to mean that there is no birth for the self from Vāsudeva or for the mind from the self. 'Birth' must be taken in the sense of self-manifestation, as is done in the case of the *Upaniṣad* passage :

अजायमानो बहुधा विजायते

(*TA* III.13.1)

Regarding the *sūtra*, II.2.42, it must be noted that it is interpreted differently in different systems of thought. The particle '*ca*' in it does not have any additional sense of argument, but only the sense of objection or contradiction to what is contained in the previous *sūtra*. It is claimed to mean that what is taught in the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* stands contradicted. This contradiction should rise only from the Vedic passages as referred to in the *sūtras*, II 2 39–40. Such passages as the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (I 1 1) and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (II 4.5,) enjoin meditation as the means of getting *mokṣa*. The *Pāñcarātra* texts, on the other hand, prescribe worship of God, primarily in the form of the idol. Hence a contradiction to this *Āgama* prescription is held to be found in the *Vedas*.

This kind of interpretation does not stand to reason, for the very aim of the *Āgamas* is not to prohibit the method of meditation, but to prescribe idol worship as an easier way which could be practised by all without distinction. So it is not anti-Vedic. Rāmānuja's interpretation which is based upon that of Yāmunācārya, seems to be reasonable. That the self is born is contradicted in the *Āgama* texts is the sense of the *sūtra* II.2.42.

The objection of Śaṅkara is not justified. If the four manifestations of God as Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna

and Aniruddha are quite independent of one another, there is the question of more than one Supreme Being But these are only the manifestations of the same God and so have only functional differences The other objection which is based on the adoption of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* by Śāṇḍilya is not also tenable, for Śāṇḍilya did not question the validity of the *Vedas* He could not obtain satisfaction from them, which is an indication of his difficulty to get it This does not suggest his irreverence towards the *Vedas*, and as such the *Āgama* tradition is not opposed to the Vedic tradition. Hence no objection could be raised against the validity of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* on the basis of this *adhikarana*, which aims only at silencing the objection that was entertained against its validity at the time when the *Brahmasūtras* were composed by Bādarāyana.

It is interesting to note in this connection the views of some other schools of thought on this *adhikaraṇa* Bhāskara, the exponent of the *Bhedābhedavāda*, treats all the *sūtras* in this *ahhikaraṇa* as directed against the validity of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*. While interpreting the *Sūtra*, II 2. 41, he questions the propriety of taking the self, mind and ego as the self and notes that the episode of Śāṇḍilya is directed against Vedic authority

Madhva, the exponent of the *Dvaita* school, takes a different attitude This *adhikarana* is, according to him, not directed against the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*, but against Śāktaism and Śaivism The rise of the world from Śakti cannot be admitted, nor should Devi, Tripurā and Bhairavī be treated as the source of the world. Śiva also is not the cause, If knowledge is held to be the cause, then that itself, being the Supreme Reality, could be admitted to create the world. The Vedic passages declare Viṣṇu as the cause, and so any other interpretation stands contradicted, as it is opposed to Vedic authority. It is a matter of opinion as to how far this interpretation could be admitted.

The previous *adhikaraṇa* called *Paśupatyadhikaraṇa* (II. 2. 35-38) is devoted to the rejection of the systems which are devoted to the worship of Śiva It is not the *Pāśupata* system alone that is meant there, but all of them, including the system of Śaivism.[469] Hence this *adhikaraṇa* cannot be concerned with Śaivism Treating it as directed against Śāktaism is meaningful, but the Śakti cult is not totally free from the principles of Śiva's worship In a way, this cult may be taken to have been condemned in the previous *adhikaraṇa* itself, though not fully Anyway, Madhva's intrepretation is original, and avoids the difficulty which Śaṅkara and Bhāskara were required to face, namely, partial acceptance of the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines. The Viśiṣṭādvaita interpretation is sane and sound in that the objection to the validity of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* is noted and the refutation of this objection is admitted. Treatment of a *prima facie* view and its rejection at the end in one and the same *adhikaraṇa* do not affect the unitary concept of the *adhikarana*

Nimbārka, the exponent of the *Svābhāvika-bhedābheda-vāda*, interprets this *adhikarana* as containing the refutation of the system of the *Śāktas*. Śakti cannot be the cause, as no effect could be produced by it without the control of Purusa over it. The *sūtra* 40 (which is numbered by him as 43) means that Śakti cannot be the cause, if Purusa is the agent The *sūtra* 41 (numbered as 44) admits Śakti to be the cause, if it rests in *Brahman*. That Śakti could not be admitted as an independent cause is conveyed in *sūtra* 42 (numbered as 45), as it is contradicted by *Śruti* and *Smṛti* In this context, it is curious to find that Kāśmirabhaṭṭā, the sub-commentator of Nimbārka's *Brahma-sūtra-bhāsya* which is called *Vedānta-pārijāta-saurabha*, follows the Viśiṣṭādvaitic interpretation in his *Kaustubhaprabhā* Nimbārka thus follows the line taken by Madhva

469. *Tattvamārtīṇḍa*, p. 552.

Vallabha, the founder of the *Śuddhādvaita* school of *Vedānta*, notes that this section is against the school of the *Bhāgavatas*. He holds that objection is taken against only one aspect of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine, namely, the rise of the self, Samkarṣaṇa, from Vāsudeva. While interpreting the *sūtra*, II 2.44 (according to his numbering), he writes that the objection against the *Pāñcarātra* cannot stand, if all the four *vyūhas* are of the form of knowledge and the origin of the world. Objection would however be valid, if all are to have absolute independence.

As regards the objection raised here on the passage of the *Āgama* which mentions the birth of the self, Saṁkarṣaṇa, from Vāsudeva, it is difficult to understand what made the exponents of the schools which are opposed to the spirit of this *adhikaraṇa*, ignore a passage of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*(III.13.1). While the word '*jāyate*' used there is not objected to with reference to *Brahman's* birth, objection is raised when it is used with reference to the self. By taking the sense of the root, '*jani*', as standing for '*prādurbhāva*', it is quite easy to note that 'birth' means only emergence or manifestation. Only what already exists will make its appearance Similarly, the root, '*naś*', meaning '*adarśana*' denotes disappearance and not destruction or annihilation. As such, when the self is said to be born, what is meant is that it has been in existence even before its appearance which is possible only as encased in a physical body. Hence 'Samkarṣaṇa' is a word used to refer to a deity who has emerged from Vāsudeva with a body and also to mean the self (*jīva*) which it controls.[470] It is in this sense the following passage is required to be understood :—

यतः प्रसूता जगतः प्रसूतिस्तोयेन जीवान्व्यससर्ज भूम्याम् ।
(*Nārāyaṇīya Upaniṣad* 1)

Regarding the objection that the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* is not included in the list of subjects which are intended to be studied,

470. *LT* VI. 13.

it must be understood that the list enumerating fourteen subjects in the *Yājñavalkya-smṛti* (1-3), is not exhaustive, for there is another list[471] which mentions eighteen subjects, adding four more, namely, *Āyurveda*, *Dhanurveda*, *Gāndharva* and *Arthaśāstra*. *Itihāsas* are also included here. Similarly, the *Āgamas* are to be considered as a subject of study, and their absence from the list does not declare their invalidity.

The word, '*Sāttvata*', did refer to a Vaiśya tribe which became elevated in social status by the birth of Kṛṣṇa in it. But it came to denote the *Pāñcarātra* system and hence lost its pejorative sense. The validity of the system does not lie merely in its name. It is the doctrine that proves its validity. Therefore, the word '*Sāttvata*' is derived in more than one way so as to make it deserve the name of the system One of them connects it with the word. '*Sat*', which means *Brahman*. Those who believe in It or do work (i.e, worship) for It are called '*Sāttvantaḥ*' Their system is called *Sāttvata*.

Vide

सत् सत्त्वं ब्रह्म तद्वन्तः सात्वन्तः ।

Or, सात्त्विका ब्रह्मविदस्तेषामिदं कर्म शास्त्रं वा सात्त्वतं
तत्कुर्वाण आचक्षाणो वा सात्त्विकः

Parāśarabhaṭṭa : *Bhagavad-guṇa-darpaṇa* on
Viṣṇusahasranāma, *Śloka* 54.

The second way of explaining it is by taking it as delighting those who adopt it.

Vide ·

सातयति (सुखयति) आश्रितान् (*Ibid*)

471. *V.P.* III, 6. 28-29.

A third way is by taking the word '*Sāt*' in the sense of the Supreme Being :—

Vide:

सात् (परमात्मा) स एतेषामस्तीति वा सात्वताः,
सात्वन्तो वा महाभागवताः । (*Ibid.*)

This word '*Sāttvata*' may mean a despicable person in its conventional sense. When it can yield another acceptable sense, through etymology, the latter sense should be preferred, particularly when the conventional one could be left aside. Otherwise, the word *ārārya*472 which is grouped here, along with the word, '*Sāttvata*', should mean a low-born man, while the conventional sense of a learned teacher is to be preferred.

The word '*devalaka*' refers to those who are not initiated according to the *Pāñcarātra* rites and who worship deities like Rudra.

Vide ·

भवेद्देवलको यो वै रुद्रकाल्युपजीवकः ।
cited in the *Āgamaprāmāṇya* p.72

Vide

शिवकेशवयोः पूजामेकाहमपि वा चरेत् ।
दूषिताः सर्वकार्येषु ते वै देवलकाः स्मृताः ॥
KA XXXVI 32,33.

Thus, there is no stigma attached to the priest who offers worship in the temple according to the *Pāñcarātra* tradition, and hence invalidity could not be attributed to the *Pāñcarātra* system on this ground.

472. MS. X. 23 Cf. *Āgamaprāmāṇya*, pp. 68-71.

Nirmālya is prohibited to those not devoted to God[473] Sandal, unguent and others which represent *nirmālya*, are applied to the holy idol of Viṣṇu and become purified. They purify the devotees of Viṣṇu who take them. So it is sinful to refer to it and food offered to Viṣṇu in degrading expressions.[474] When these are offered to Viṣvaksena, they become defective as *nirmālya*, and so they could be partaken before being offered to Viṣvaksena, by the devotees of Viṣṇu.[475] Hence the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* does not lose its validity for prescribing the partaking of '*nirmālya*'.

Lastly, the authority of the *Pāñcarātra* system cannot be assailed on the ground that the *Vaikhānasa* system contains vehement attacks on this *Āgama*. That the *Vaikhānasa* is based on Vedic authority cannot be an argument in favour of its superiority over the *Pāñcarātra*, since the latter is also based on the *Vedas* to a limited extent and this can be used as a defence in its own favour. Mutual recrimination is noticed in the texts of both the *Āgamas*, and so it is not easy to settle the authority of one at the expense of the other. It would be prudent to treat each one as valid without reference to the other. In all probability such passages which condemn the authority of each other should have got into these texts at a later date. Vedānta

473. *ParS* XXXI 197-199,

474. Vide, *Āgamaprāmāṇya*, pp 74-78

475. *ParS*. XXVII. 24b, 25a *VS*. offers a wise interpretation. *Nirmālya* is a reject when offered to other deities (XXIX 12). This text refers to the view of some scholars who hold that what is offered to Viṣṇu, must be taken by His devotees. (*Ibid*. XXIX 13a) Cf. *Nāradīyasamhitā* XXIV. 80b 81.

The following passage in it is worth nothing:

तेभ्यो दद्याच्च नैवेद्यं मधुपर्कपुरःसरम् ।
किंचित्संस्थाप्य पूजार्थं विष्वक्सेनस्य पूर्वतः ॥

II. 122b, 123a

Deśika remarks that such passages should have been interpolated by those who were greedy (or eager) to occupy forcibly each other's place and thereby were keen to taste the sugarcane of pleasure, or by bachelors who were degraded priests.

Vide :-

तानि नूनमिक्षुभक्षणकर्तृचिकीर्षुभिः प्रक्षिप्तानि परस्पर-
स्थानाक्रमणलोलुपैर्बटुभिर्वा पूजकाधमैर्निवेशितानि ।

PR, p 101,

It is possible to offer some kind of defence for this mutual attack Each system is anxious to speak of itself in the highest self-praise Naturally, to achieve this, it is required to throw mud at the other.

Vide :

न हि निन्दा निन्द्यं निन्दितुं प्रवर्तते अपि तु
निन्दादितरत्प्रशंसितुमिति ।

Hence serious thought need not be bestowed on this question. One of them must not be unduly extolled, ignoring the intrinsic worth of the other.

Such indulgence in mutual accusations is not confined to these two *Āgamas* The *Vedas* too contain passages which illustrate this tendency.

Vide :

ऋग्गाथा कुम्ब्या तन्मितं यजुर्निगदो वृथा वाक्तन्मितं
सामाथो यः कश्चन गेष्णः स्वर ओमिति सत्यं नेत्यनृतम् ।

Aitareya Āraṇyaka, II 3 6 8.

The sense of this passage is as follows ;

अग्निमीळे पुरोहितम् (I 1,1) is a *ṛk*.

प्रातः प्रातः अनृतं ते वदन्ति (*Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* V 31 6a) is an utterance (*gāthā*) There is a passage technically called *kumbyā* which takes the form of giving instruction for good conduct.

Vide :

आचारशिक्षारूपा कुम्ब्या ।

(Sāyaṇa on *ibid.*)

This is illustrated by the following passage :

ब्रह्मचार्यस्योपाशान कर्म कुरु मा सुषुप्थाः ।

S.P.Br. XI.5.4.5.

The *ṛk* cited above is of a general nature. The *gāthā* and *kumbyā* given above are treated as particular *ṛks*. All the three are metrical and are of a definite length and so are held to be within limits (*mita*).

इषे त्वोर्जेत्वा वायवस्थ (*T.S.* I.1.1 1)

is a *yajus* passage.

अग्ने महाँ असि ब्राह्मण भारत (*T.S.* II. 5 9.1.)

is a *nigada* which is stated as of the nature of addressing another. Then there are *arthavādas* which are referred to here as *vṛthā vāk*.

Vide

येऽर्थवादा या च राजसभायां परिहासादिरूपेणोच्यते सा सर्वा वृथा वाक्

(*Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* III.5.3.1)

The *yajus*, *nigada* and *vṛthā vāk* together constitute one whole and are treated as *yajus* itself, but the formation here is not regular and so is said to be not within a particular limit (*amita*).

3. The *Praṇava* is uttered as part of the *Sāma* chants as in

ओमिति सत्यं न

This is not true (*anṛta*) · that is, it is a lie.

Here the *Yajurveda* and *Sāmaveda* are referred to as inferior to the *Ṛgveda*. The latter alone has regularity, while the *Yajus* has no regularity and the *Sāma* is only music and has no relevance to reality. The purpose of this passage is not to ridicule or condemn the *Yajurveda* and *Sāmaveda*, but to show how

superior the *Ṛgveda* is to both of them. A passage of this kind occurring in the *Āraṇyaka* of the *Ṛgveda*, illustrates how contradictory passages occur even in the *Vedas* This does not prove the other two *Vedas* to be invalid

Similarly, the *Sāmaveda* is condemned by treating it as belonging to the departed souls and contrasting it with the *Ṛgveda* which is said to be divine and with the *Yajurveda* stated to be human Hence its sound is impure.

Vide :

ऋग्वेदो दैवतुल्यो यजुर्वेदस्तु मानुषः ।
सामवेदस्तु पित्र्यः स्यात्तस्याशुचिर्ध्वनिः ॥

MS IV 124

The passage which mentions Śāṇḍilya to have been disappointed in not getting at the truth by studying the *Vedas* and to have become enlightened by studying the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine must also receive the same interpretation. The reference to his disappointment with Vedic study is not intended to devalue the *Vedas*, but to extol the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*.

Similarly, it is said that, when weighed against each other, the *Mahabhārata* was found to be heavy, while the *Vedas* were light. This is only praise conferred on the importance of the *Mahābhārata* at the expense of the *Vedas*

Vide ·

चत्वार एकतो वेदा भारतं चैकमेकतः ।
समागतैः सुरर्षिभिस्तुलामारोपितं पुरा ॥
महत्त्वे च गुरुत्वे च ध्रियमाणे ततोऽधिकम् ।
महत्त्वाच्च गुरुत्वाच्च महाभारतमीरितम् ॥

Mbh Ādi. I. 297,299.

Thus these statements convey that while a particular text is intended to be extolled, other texts are given an apparent condemnation. This must be treated only as *arthavāda*, and so the texts which are condemned cannot be treated as

unauthoritative. The mutually recriminatory passages in the *Pāñcarātra* and *Vaikhānasa* texts can only show that each of these *Āgamas* is valid, without getting affected in the least by such condemnation.

The *Pāñcarātra Āgama* should not be treated as unauthoritative, because of the alleged deceitfulness of Vāsudeva as stated in the passage :

वासुदेवाभिधानेन केनचिद्विप्रलिप्सुना ।
प्रणीतं प्रस्तुतं तन्त्रमिति निश्चिनुमो वयम् ॥
(cited in the *Āgamaprāmāṇya* p. 23.)

The *Pāñcarātra Āgama* was revealed by Nārayaṇa who is identified with Vāsudeva and glorified in the *Upaniṣads* as omniscient and compassionate, and so evil designs could not be attributed to Him.

The *Vedās*, are claimed to be intrinsically valid by not being the composition of any author. But their authority could be questioned, as they too contain contradictory passages like works of human authorship. 476

Vide :

1. अतिरात्रे षोडशिनं गृह्णाति ।
   नातिरात्रे षोडशिनं गृह्णाति ।
2. उदिते जुहोति ।
   अनुदिते जुहोति ।
3. व्रीहिभिर्यजेत ।
   यवैर्यजेत ।

We may resolve the contradictions by treating the first set of passages as giving rise to different results when the practice is

476. P V Kane · *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. II, part 2, pp. 1204-1205 (1) *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, XVI. 1. 4, *SP. Br.* IX. 7, (2) *Aitareya Brāhmana*, V 5. 4, *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, II, 1, 42.

carried out independently, the second as intended to be practised by persons with different qualifications for each and the third as to be carried out at different times.[477]

The *Pāñcarātra Āgama*, though it has an author or proclaimer in omniscient Nārāyaṇa, is free from all kinds of defects such as deception, delusion and perversity It is therefore valid, and the more so, because it gives correct knowledge about the Lord The glorification of Viṣṇu in this *Āgama* as the supreme among the gods, is a question already settled in many of the texts which declare, on the authority of the *Upanisads*, that He alone is great Such texts are in the *Mahābhārata*, *Visnupurāna*, *Varāhapurāṇa*, *Manusmṛti* and others. In particular the *Mahābhārata* plays a significant role here It is in the *S'āntiparvan* of the epic that the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine gets detailed treatment. The author Vyāsa, who gets the entire credit for this, is believed to be not different from Bādarāyaṇa, the author of the *Brahmasūtras*.[478] Hence the objection to the authenticity of the system is questioned in the *Brahmasūtras* (II, 2 39-42) and is answered in favour of admitting the *Āgama's* validity

The origin of *Ekānti-dharma*, which is the basic foundation from which the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* is developed, is described in

477 *S'rutaprakāsikā* on II 2 42

478 Sudarśanasūri cites passages from the *Skandapurāna* to support the identity of Vyāsa with Bādarāyaṇa (*S'rutaprakāśikā*, Madras edn. with ten commentaries, pp 59-60) Vedāntadeśika also cites the above passage Vide, *Tattvaṭīkā* (Madras edn with ten commentaries, p. 73) He cites a passage from the *Bhāmatī* of Vācaspatimiśra

Vide ·

आहु च परमाप्यव्याख्याता-
ब्रह्मसूत्रकृते वेदव्यासाय परवेधसे ।
ज्ञानशक्त्यवतारराय नमो भगवतो हरेः ।

All other exponents of *Advaita* dispute this identity For a detailed account on this matter, see *SVOI*. VII

an interesting way in the *Śāntiparvan*, ch.358. The sages called Phenapa were the earliest persons to practise this *dharma*. Vaikhānasa got it from them and Soma received it from Vaikhānasa. Then this *dharma* disappeared In the *Cākṣuṣa* cosmic epoch, Brahmā got it from Soma who taught it to Rudra, who imparted it to the Vālakhilyas in the *Kṛtayuga*. Then this *dharma* disappeared for a second time. In the *Vācika* manifestation of Brahmā, it appeared from Nārāyaṇa who imparted it to the sage, Suparṇa, who preached it thrice whence it got the name *Trisauparṇa*. Vāyu received it from Suparṇa and preached it to the sages. Again, this *dharma* went out of sight. Nārāyaṇa brought it out and taught it to Brahmā.

Vide :

धर्मं चाग्र्यं जग्राह सरहस्यं ससंग्रहम् ।
आरण्यकेन सहितं नारायणमुखोद्गतम् ॥

Mbh Śānti. CCCLVIII. 30b,31a.

Brahmā created the world with the help of this *dharma*. He taught this to Svārociṣa Manu from whom his son, Śankhapadā, got it. It passed on from him to his son Sudharmā All these happened in the *Kṛtayuga* This *dharma* then disappeared for the fourth time in *Tretāyuga* Nārāyaṇa brought it out and taught it to Sanatkumāra from whom it was acquired by Viraṇa Prajāpati who taught this to the sage Raibhya It was then transmitted to his son Kukṣipāla. The *dharma* disappeared then for the fifth time. Nārāyaṇa taught it again to Brahmā from whom it passed to the sages, Barhiṣads; from them to the sage Jyeṣṭha who studied the *Sāmaveda* and from him to King Avikampana. Again, for the sixth time this *dharma* was lost. Brahmā was then taught this in his seventh birth by Nārāyaṇa. Dakṣa got it from Brahmā and gave it to Jyeṣṭha, his grandson by his daughter. From him it passed to Āditya and then to his son Vivasvān. At the beginning of the *Tretāyuga*, Vivasvān gave it to Manu who taught this to Ikṣvāku. Again it disappeared and was restored by Nārāyaṇa who taught this to Nārada.

This system is called *Pāñcarātra*, wherein the Lord's manifestations are one, two, three and four under various reckonings. The *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Vedas* and *Āraṇyakas* (which stand for the *Upaniṣads*) form part of the system.

Vide.

> एकव्यूहविभागो वा क्वचिद् द्विव्यूहसंज्ञितः ।
> त्रिव्यूहश्चापि संख्यातश्चतुर्व्यूहश्च दृश्यते ॥
> एवमेकं सांख्ययोग वेदारण्यकमेव च ।
> परस्पराण्यङ्गान्येतानि पाञ्चरात्रं च कथ्यते ॥

Ibid 81

The *Pāñcarātra* doctrines were promulgated by seven sages called *Citraśikhandins*. Their names are Marici, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha. They wrote 1,50,000 *ślokas* The Lord commended what they composed as authoritative, conveying His commandments. Svāyambhuva Manu and after him Uśanas and Bṛhaspati preached them. King Vasu received them from Bṛhaspati. Vasu practised them and then the system disappeared.[479]

The *Citraśikhandins* mentioned here are only the well known seven sages whose names are given differently in some sources.[480] Whether Vasu obtained these doctrines from Bṛhaspati requires consideration. An account of the practice of these doctrines by Vasu is given in the *Mahābhārata*, *Śāntiparvan*, Chapter 343. King Vasu performed the *Aśvamedha* No animal was offered as victim, but instead the effigy of an animal, prepared out of grains brought from the forest. Viṣṇu was pleased with this and appeared before the king and received the offering, but was invisible to others. Bṛhaspati who was the priest there, became angry when the king informed him that Viṣṇu received the

479 *Mbh Śānti*, CCCXLIII. 28-62.

480 The seven sages who are called Citraśikhandins are included among the nine pupils of Vikhanas See fn 287.

offering in person. He blamed the king for discarding the animal sacrifice and using the effigy of an animal made of flour in its place. Besides, the Lord did not appear before him. Bṛhaspati refused to associate himself further with the performance of the sacrifice The sages, Ekata, Dvita and Trita, the mind-born sons of Brahmā who were present there, recounted their vain attempts to visualize the Lord In spite of severe penance, they could not see Him.[481] Bṛhaspati was then convinced, and he helped Vasu in completing the sacrifice

From this account, it is clear that King Vasu was following the principles of religion as set out in the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines. Bṛhaspati learnt about them only on the occasion when the sacrifice was performed by Vasu It is only possible to say that Bṛhaspati agreed to continue his participation in the sacrifice, when convinced of the value of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines by the sages; and in this sense, he was also an exponent of these doctrines.

An account of the visit paid by Nārada to Śvetadvīpa gives some information about the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*. Nārada went to an island called Śvetadvīpa and found certain persons who had no sense-organs, did not take food and were motionless. They emitted fragrance. He saw there the three sages, Ekata, Dvita and Trita. They told him that at the conclusion of their

481 These are stated to be sons of Brahmā (*Mbh* Śānti CCCXLIV. 6). There are hymns in *RV*, *SY* and *SV* for which they are seers. Vide *RV* IX. 33, 3 4. 10 1 3. Their hymns glorify Viṣṇu. Yāska derives their names in different ways

त्रितस्तीर्णमतो मेधया बभूवापि वा संख्यानामैवाभिप्रेतम् ।

Nirukta IV. 6.

About the inadequacy of penance, vide :

न शक्यस्त्वया द्रष्टुमस्माभिर्वा बृहस्पते ।
यस्य प्रसादं कुरुते सर्वे तं द्रष्टुमर्हति ॥

Mbh. Śānti, CCCXLIII, 25.

penance for a thousand years, they were advised by an incorporeal voice to go to Śvetadvīpa and meet the holy persons there. Accordingly, they did so, but could not see anything there, being blinded by light of extreme brilliance They could not see the Lord, but with divine grace they again performed penance and beheld men white in complexion, resembling the moon in lustre, and ever uttering *mantras* with folded palms. This was mental *japa* All of them were of the same uniform splendour. Suddenly, a flash of light appeared before the sages who saw a group of people uttering the word '*namah*' The vision of these sages became blinded by their extreme brilliance Only the following *śloka* which they were uttering was heard by the sages

Vide

जित ते पुण्डरीकाक्ष नमस्ते विश्वभावन ।
नमस्तेऽस्तु हृषीकेश महापुरुष पूर्वज ॥

A breeze was then wafting fragrance. Those persons were conversant with the fivefold division of time (*pañcakāla*) and they were exclusively devoted to Hari (Viṣṇu) and worshipped Him with great devotion through mind, speech and action. The sages felt that the Lord should have presented Himself before them, as they heard those persons utter words indicating the Lord's presence These sages, however, could not behold the Lord Those persons did not observe the presence of the sages there A voice addressed the sages asking them to wait till *Tretāyuga.* The sages were doing *japa* from then onwards. As yet, they had not seen God and they informed Nārada that he too could not do so

However, Nārada went to Śvetadvīpa and praised Hari, addressing Him and using several expressions such as 'Pāñcarātrika', 'Vaikhānasa', 'Śrīvāsa', 'Vāsudeva' and others. The Lord appeared before him. Nārada praised Him. The Lord said that even Ekata and other sages could not behold Him After directing him to go away from that place, lest his presence

should disturb the devoted life of the persons there, He went out of sight [482]

Nārada witnessed then those persons entering into the Lord. This is called *vilaya*, which is described in the *bhūtaśuddhi* process Vāsudeva is declared to be the soul of all beings, Saṁkarṣaṇa the self, Pradyumna the mind and Aniruddha the ego [483]

In the brief period when Nārada beheld the Lord, the latter gave him an account of His divine descents. Ekata and others were born as monkeys when the Lord incarnated as Rāma. Nārada learnt that the Lord had four forms (Vāsudeva, Saṁkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha). The Lord referred to Himself as Sāttvata instead of as Kṛṣna.[484]

After the Lord disappeared, Nārada went to Badarikāśrama and learnt the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines from Nārāyaṇa. Vyāsa is stated in the epic to have gone to the Milky Ocean and returned to the hermitage [485]

The doctrines of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* are set forth by Vyāsa Aniruddha is the lord of creation [486] Nara and Nārāyana explain the glory of Bhagavān [487] The descent of God as Hayagrīva and the *Ekāntidharma* are well depicted.[488] The Lord is stated to be the expounder of the *Pāñcarātra*.

Vide .

पाञ्चरात्रस्य कृत्स्नस्य वक्ता तु भगवान् स्वयम् ।

Mbh Śānti. *CCCLIX. 68.*

482 *Ibid* CCCXLVI

483 *Ibid*. CCCXLVII.

484 *Ibid* CCCXLVIII. 55.

485 *Ibid*. 62-80

486 *Ibid*. CCCXLIX. 69

487 *Ibid*. CCCLIV.

488. *Ibid*. CCCLVII, 47-76, CCCLVIII.

The contents of Chapters 342 to 359 of the *S'āntiparvan* show how the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines arose from Nārāyana and were expounded through the ages The statement that Vaikhānasa obtained them from Phenapa suggests that the *Vaikhānasa* system is ancient and was not different, as it is held now, from the *Pāñcarātra*. Vaikhānasa was taught the *Ekāntidharma* by Phenapa, and this is called *Pāñcarātra* [489]

The accounts given in the *Vaikhānasa* texts are confusing.[490] *Vaikhānasa* is said to be *S'rīśāstra*, having the name '*Ekāyana*'. In another context, Yājñavalkya and others are stated to have scented danger to the *Vaikhānasa* system and created another in which the *Ekāyana mantras* were freely used [491] This came to be known as the *Pāñcarātra* If this be the case, either the *Vaikhānasa* system (which was also called *Ekāyana*) should have been using the *Ekāyana mantras* and as such could not be different from the *Pāñcarātra*, or the former must not have been based on the *Ekāyana* recension. When the account given in Chapter 358 of the *S'āntiparvan* is considered, it seems that the *Vaikhānasa* was the forerunner of the *Pāñcarātra* Perhaps these are not two systems with minor differences, but only one and the same system with different names. That this is probable is evidenced by the use of *mantras* in which the names of Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha occur.[492] At least, the second and third belong to the *Pāñcarātra*. Vāsudeva is not given prominence in the *Vaikhānasa* system

The account given in the *Mahābhārata* refers to *bhūtaśuddhi*,[493] but there is no reference to *yantra* and *mudrā* The *Ekāntidharma*

489 *Ibid* 81

490 *SA* LXIII 117

491 *Ibid* LXXVIII 4

492 *Ibid* LXIV, p 392

493 *Mbh. S'ānti.* CCCXLVII. 28-31.

which was expounded and promulagated by several authorities at different periods, should have been practised exclusively by the descendants or pupils of Vikhanas who developed a *vyūha* doctrine consisting of five deities—Viṣṇu, Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha [494] As the *dharma* continued being expounded and developed, the Kṛṣṇa cult should have given rise to the *caturvyūha* concept which forms part of the *Pāñcarātra* but is not noticed by the *Vaikhānasa* system. The *Vaikhānasa* may have had its development in a single family professing the *Vaikhānasa-sūtra*, and so was not adopted by others. The *Pāñcarātra*, on the other hand, had to appeal to a very large community which had no specific doctrine for worship.

It is at this time that the two systems had to assert their individuality and superiority over each other in a spirit of rivalry The texts in both the systems therefore contain passages of mutual attack, and these should be treated as interpolations made by those who were interested in advocating their own doctrines It is thus that we find certain passages which contradict one another [495] When viewed without bias, the two systems seem to have had the same source, though their development might have been in slightly different directions.

It is said in the *Mahābhārata* that Āditya got the *Ekāntidharma* from Jyeṣṭha. He taught this at the beginning of the *Tretāyuga* to Vivasvān and it passed on from Vivasvān to Manu and from Manu to Iksvāku [496] This *Ekāntidharma* consists in the practice of devotion exclusively to Viṣṇu. To be devoted, one has to carry out the act of worship which is of various kinds and is brought under *karma-* or *kriyā-yoga* according to Patañjali, the author of the *Yoga-sūtras* [497] This *dharma* can

494 *JS* IV 13b-14a.

495 *SA* LXV 117, LXXVIII. 4, *VS* XXXIX. 276, 279, 285b.

496 *Mbh Śānti* CCCLVIII. 41-52.

497 *Bhojavṛtti* on *YS*, II. 1

be equated with the *karma-yoga* taught in the *Bhagavadgītā* where the Lord mentions that it was taught by Him to Vivasvān who transmitted this to Manu From Manu it passed on to Iksvāku. Then it disappeared. The order in which this *karma-yoga* was transmitted is the same as in the case of *Ekāntidharma* in the epic. The contention of many scholars is that the *Bhagavadgītā* does not refer to the teachings of the *Pāñcarātra* Yet the order in which the doctrine was handed down is the same in both the *Pāñcarātra* and the *Bhagavadgītā* and the temptation is irresistible to discover the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines in the *Gītā* [498]

The doctrines of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* must be admitted to be of ancient origin They were known to Vyāsa, the author of the *Mahābhārata* The *Vaisnavadharma-parvan*, in the *Āśvamedhika-parvan*,[499] contains an account of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines. The concept of *vyūha* is frequently referred to there

The *Jitante Stotra*, which contains 128 *ślokas* in six sections, is a *khila* of the *Rgveda* [500] The verses are unaccented When Nārada visited Śvetadvipa and met the sages, Ekata, Dvita and Trita, they advised him to repeat a *Jitante śloka* and taught the *stotra*. Then, Nārada went to a mountain called Jayanta where Brahmā was performing penance and taught it to him Accordingly, this found a place in the epics and the *purānas*

The first five sections are expected to be recited each at a part of the day into which it is divided according to the *Pāñcarātra* system The last is to be recited at any part of the

498 *Bh G* does not teach the doctrines of the Pañcarātra, as is clear from the absence of reference to the *vyūha* doctrine and the fivefold division of the daily routine

499 *Mbh Aśva* CII 84, CIV 84-89.

500 The *Jitante-stotra* is stated to have formed part of the *Ṛgveda Khila* by Periyavāccān Pillai in his commentary on this *stotra*,

day. The name of the *stotra* is taken from the first *śloka* which has already been quoted in the earlier account of the visit of Nārada to Śvetadvīpa and which begins with the words, "*Jitaṁ te*".

Some of the concepts of the *Pāñcarātra* system are found here. For instance, God has six auspicious qualities which are the foremost among His countless qualities[501] The three *vyūhas*, Samkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, have each two of these qualities[502] The number of *vyūhas*[503] and the divisions of the day[504] are also mentioned The doctrine of self-surrender[505] which has a special importance in the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*, is referred to frequently. The Lord's figure is gloriously depicted and the left hand of the Lord holds the club which is a particular feature of the idol.[506]

The date of this work cannot be settled. The opening stanza could have been there from the very earliest times. This is treated as a *mantra* in the *Pāñcarātra* texts,[507] some of which[508] contain an exposition of it. By itself, it does not convey any particular concept of the *Āgama*. The *stotra* as such could have been composed during the period when the particular concepts became fully developed. It cannot be late in origin, as most of the *Pāñcarātra*[509] works refer to it and cite passages from it.

501 *Jitante Stotra* II 30, V 2.
502 *Ibid* IV. 4
503 *Ibid* II 31, IV 5
504 *Ibid.* 18, 19, 32, III. 3, IV. 9, 10.
505. *Ibid* V. 4, 8
506. *Ibid* II 4, 5, 22
507 LT. XVII. 20
508. *AhS.* LIII.
509. *Ibid*, LT, XVII, 20; GS, XIII, 223b-224a,

The *Visnupurāṇa* contains some of the doctrines of the *Pāñcarātra* system Vāsudeva is the Supreme Lord.[510] He is present everywhere and everything rests in Him

Vide .

सर्वत्रासौ समस्तं च वसत्यत्रेति वै यतः ।
ततस्स वासुदेवेति विद्वद्भिः परिपठ्यते ॥

VP. I 2. 12.

The word, '*Bhagavān*', refers to Viṣṇu, possessing the six qualities of *jñāna*, *śakti*, *bala*, *aiśvarya* and *tejas* without a tinge of any blemishes.[511]

Vide .

ज्ञानशक्तिबलैश्वर्यवीर्यतेजांस्यशेषतः ।
भगवच्छब्दवाच्यानि विना हेयगुणादिभिः ॥

VP. VI 5 79.

Viṣṇu with Śrī is the Supreme Reality Śrī is never without Him.

Vide :

नित्यैवैषा जगन्माता विष्णोः श्रीरनपायिनी ।
यथा सर्वगतो विष्णुस्तथैवेयं द्विजोत्तम ॥

VP I 8 17.

She is Tuṣṭi and Śakti.

Vide

सन्तोषो भगवाँल्लक्ष्मीस्तुष्टिर्मैत्रेय शाश्वती ।

Ibid I. 8 17.

अवष्टम्भो गदापाणिः शक्तिर्लक्ष्मीर्द्विजोत्तम ॥

Ibid. I. 8. 29a

510 *VP* VI. 5. 75, 80, 82.

511 *Ibid*. VI, 5. 74, 78, 85

She awards *mokṣa* to the selves.

Vide :

यज्ञविद्या महाविद्या गुह्यविद्या च शोभने ।
आत्मविद्या च देवि त्वं विमुक्तिफलदायिनी ॥
Ibid. I. 9 120.

There is mention of the four manifestations of God in *vyūha* form [512]

Viṣṇu pervades both matter and the selves and is the Self of all Both the animate and inanimate beings are enveloped by Viṣṇu's power which sustains them. This power is of the nature of these.

Vide·

प्रधानेऽवस्थितो व्यापी चेतनात्मात्मवेदनः ।
प्रधानं च पुमांश्चैव सर्वं भूतात्मभूतया ॥

विष्णुशक्त्या महाबुद्धे वृतौ संश्रयधर्मिणौ ।
तयोः सैव पृथग्भावकारणं संश्रयस्य च ॥
VP. II. 7. 29, 30.

शक्तिः सापि तथा विष्णोः प्रधानपुरुषात्मकम् । [513]
Ibid. II 7 32a.

These doctrines which belong to the *Pāñcarātra* system, are dealt with in this *Purāṇa* Its date must be before the fourth century A D., as a reference is made to it in the *Manimekalai*,[514] a Tamil classic composed about the third century A D.

Since these doctrines are of ancient origin, they could have been incorporated in this *Purāṇa*, but the indebtedness of the

512 *Ibid* V 18 58.

513. That S'rī is the source of matter and selves is admitted by both the Vaikhānasa and Pāñcarātra *Āgamas*. Vide ·—*VK*. pp. 493-494, *LT*, 6. 3-25 514 See fn. 183

ASV—23

Pāñcarātra texts to it, at least for some of them, cannot be completely ruled out.

The tenets and some of practices which pertain to the *Pāñcarātra* are mentioned in the *Bhāgavata* God is *sāttvatām pati*, the leader of the Sāttvatas [515] The fourfold manifestation of the Lord is frequently referred to[516] He has Śrī as His consort[517] and has the six qualities [518] Reference to the self as '*jīvakośa*'[519] indicates the author's acquaintance with the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine. There is no method other than *prapatti* to get *moksa* [520] This *Purāna* is doubtless late in origin and contains references to the *tāntrika* mode of worship [521] But this is not of much help in determining the antiquity of the *purāṇas*

The *Visnudharmottara*,[522] *Śāṇḍilyasmṛti*,[523] *Purānas* like *Pādma*,[524] *Vāraha*,[525] *Gāruḍa*,[526] *Linga*[527] and *Vāmana*[528] and the *Itihāsasamuccaya*[529] contain topics dealt with in the

515 *Ibid* *Bh* I 2. 14,

516 *Ibid*. I. 5. 37.

517 *Ibid*. I 16. 30.

518 *Ibid* I. 3 36

519 *Ibid* X 82. 48.

520 *Ibid*. XI 12 15

521 *Ibid* XI 11 37 Abhinavagupta (C 1050 A D) mentions the name '*Bhāgavata*' and its eleventh *skandha* and quotes the 17th *śloka* in the 20th chepter in his commentary on *Bh. G*

522 Part III

523 Cited in *RTS* I. p. 424

524 *Uttarakhaṇḍa* ch. LXXXVIII.

525 LXVI 11 , LXIX. 25a.

526 I 137,

527. II. 7

528. XIII-XVIII.

529. Cited in *PR*. pp. 104, 149 (Adyar edn).

Pāñcarātra texts. The dates of these works have not been fixed with any degree of certainty. It is therefore hard to find out whether the *Pāñcarātra* texts are indebted to these sources or whether what they say on these doctrines should be considered to bear the influence of the *Āgamas.*

The ancient Tamil classics contain a graphic description of the gods, particularly Viṣṇu. The account is identical with that given in Sanskrit workr like the *Visnupurāna.* The *Paripāḍal* which is a collection of small poems composed about the beginning of the Christian era, has six pieces devoted to the praise of Visnu. Among them, the third selection is said to refer to Viṣṇu as glorified in the *Āgamas.*

Vide ·–*Virindu ahanra kēḻvi anaittinum*

Paripāḍal III. 48.

The word '*kēḻvi*' is taken to mean *Āgama.* The four *vyūha* manifestations of Vāsudeva, Samkarsaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are mentioned in the following lines :—

Śenkatkāri karuṅkan veḻḻai,
Ponkatpaccai paiṅkan mā al.

Ibid. III. 81 12

The two passages cited above require some consideration. The word, '*kēḻvi*', in the first passage need not necessarily mean '*Āgama*', much less the *Pāñcarātra* The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* too glorifies Visnu exclusively. It may mean any text like a *purāṇa* or some other kind of religious literature.

While interpreting the second passage, the commentator, P V. Somasundaranar, writes that the two lines refer to Vāsudeva, Samkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha respectively, as they can be identified from their colours, black, white, red and green. He bases this identification on the black complexion of Kṛṣṇa, who is treated as Vasudeva (son of Vasudeva), and the white one of Balarāma who is the same as Samkarsaṇa and who

is taken to be Ādiśeṣa descended on earth Vāsudeva is, however, not Kṛṣṇa, but the primeval Lord. The colours of the four deities are given differently in the *Pāñcarātra* texts. According to one version,[530] they are white, red, yellow and black, and another[531] has it that they are white, blue, yellow and black The second version mentions that Saṃkarṣaṇa's colour is similar to that of *indranīla*, a sapphire which is blue in colour.

These two lines of the poem may, however, be taken to denote the four deities through their representation by their colours, without considering discrepancies in the colours of the deities as given in the different versions The *Pāñcarātra* doctrines should be taken to have been popular in Tamil Nadu long before the beginning of the Christian era as the *Paripādal* is taken to have been compiled about the first century A D [532]

Such a date may not be accepted by some scholars who would offer a different interpretation. The colours may stand for the complexion of the Lord in the *Kṛta*, *Treta*, *Dvāpara* and *Kali yugas* respectively. The *Vaikhānasa*[533] and *Pāñcarātra*[534] texts and the *Bhāgavata*[535] make a reference to this concept. If this interpretation is regarded as forced, the conclusion will not be in favour of the prevalance of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines at the beginning of (or prior to) the Christian era, but it may accept the prevalence at that time of a concept of a general kind which is not characteristic of any particular *Āgama*

530 *Bh* XI 5 20-32

531 *LT*, X 27-38. For a slight difference in the account, see Maṇavālamahāmuni *Tattvatrayabhāṣya*, p. 103

532 See Introduction to the *ParS*,

533 *VK* p 103

534 *SS* V 82-92, cf *LT*. XXXVI. 62-63.

535. See under fn. 513.

The same work refers to the shrine of Viṣṇu at Tirumāliruñcolai near Madurai in Tamil Nadu. It mentions the black-complexioned Kṛṣna and white-coloured Baladeva.[536] The banners of the two deities help in identifying them. Similarly, the temples of Krsna and Balarāma are referred to in the *Śilappadikāram*[537] and *Puranānūru*[538] In both these works, the two deities are identified by their complexions and also by their banners.

The mention of Balarāma in the above texts may suggest that the *Pāñcarātra* concept is meant here. Or Balarāma could have been respected, as He is considered as representing an incarnation of Viṣṇu. So the cult of Vaiṣṇavism may be indicated here Particularly, we have to take into account the fact that the *Vaikhānasa* form of worship is adopted in the temple at Tirumāliruñcolai where both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma receive worship. Or this need not indicate the prevalence of the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* during the period, for the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* does not attach importance to the worship of Balarāma and Kṛsna as supreme deities

A composition of Tirumangai Āzhvār is held to refer to the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* in a passage[539] where the words, '*aṛam nūl*', occur. But this may refer to any text that is based on the *Vedas*. The Āzhvārs refer to the different complexions of God in different *yugas*[540] They mention the five weapons of Viṣṇu,[541] including the club (*gadā*) which has to be held in one of His hands according to the *Pāñcarātra* tradition,[542] and by a

536 *Paripādal*, III, IV, XV

537 Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma *Śilappadikāram*. V. 2 171, 172.

538 *Puranānūru*, 56.

539 *Periya Tirumozhi* X 6 1 See com by Periyavaccanpillai.

540. For instance, *Tiruccandaviruttam*, 17.

541. *Ibid* 24, 97.

542. *LT*, XXXVIII, 54.

whom Vāsudeva and Arjuna are adorable This would mean that Vāsudeva and Arjuna were considered as fit to be worshipped. Posing a question as to why the word, 'Vāsudeva', could not be taken as derived from the word, 'Vasudeva' with the suffix–,'*aṇ*', according to the *Aṣṭādhyāyi* (IV 1 114) in the sense of offspring, Patañjali, the author of the *Mahābhāṣya*, remarks that the word 'Vāsudeva' here is the name of a god and not that of a Kṣatriya, the latter sense referring to Vāsudeva, a Kṣatriya.

Vide :-

नैषा क्षत्रियाख्या संज्ञैषा तत्रभवतः

Mahābhāṣya on *ibid.*

The *Kāśikāvṛtti* offers a clear explanation :

संज्ञैषा देवताविशेषस्य न क्षत्रियाख्या

The word 'Vāsudeva' which then is required to be taken as the name of God is derived in the *Padamañjarī* :-

वसत्यस्मिन् सर्वमिति व्युत्पत्त्या परमात्मन एषा संज्ञा

Here the author, Haradatta, mentions that Vāsudeva is the name of the Supreme Being (*Paramātman*) He adds further that when it is said in the *Kāśikā* that 'Vāsudeva' is not the name of a Ksatriya, it is implied that it is not a patronymic. The compound '*Vāsudevārjunābhyām*' is of the *dvandva* type and must have the word, 'Arjuna' as its first member because of the less number of vowels, according to the rules

अजाद्यदन्तम् ।

and

अल्पाच्तरम् ।

(*Aṣṭādhyāyī*, II.2.33,34),

But in accordance with the *Vārttikā*,

अभ्यर्हितं च

(on II.2.34),

the word 'Vāsudeva' denotes one worthy of respect and so is placed as the first member.[546]

This evidence proves that about 800 B C., the period of Pāṇini, the word, 'Vāsudeva', already meant the name of a person who is shown respect. That it is not the name of a Ksatriya is made clear by Patañjali who lived about 150 B C. One can say that Pānini may not mean God, but only the son of Vasudeva But it cannot be wrong to hold that Patañjali must have been following a tradition to which Pānini also belonged. 'Vāsudeva' is the name of God and not of Vasudeva's son alone. As the later commentators explain, there is justification for taking the word 'Vāsudeva' in the sense of the Supreme Deity of the *Pāñcarātra* system. This would give a date about 800 B C when the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines became developed into a system

It is held by some scholars that Arjuna, whose name is mentioned in the *sūtra* cited above along with that of Vāsudeva, was also respected and that there was also an Arjuna cult in vogue then, which however became merged into the Vāsudeva cult and came to be forgotten in later days [547] This contention deserves serious consideration. Four different suffixes are enjoined in the *sūtras* (II 3.96-99) in the sense of '*bhakti*', which may mean attachment or liking as the illustration *āpūpika*, *pāyasika*, *māhārājika*, *nākulika*, *pāṇinīya* and others suggest Similarly, '*bhakti*' can be taken to mean devotion in the case of Vāsudeva and mere affection in the case of Arjuna Arjuna received perhaps respect from some admirers for his valour or his intimacy with Kṛṣna.

There are certain inscriptions of the centuries preceding the Christian era which suggest unmitakably the worship of Vāsudeva.

546 *Kāśikā* on the *Astādhyāyī* IV 3. 98.

547 *Arjunāyana* was a living creed in Jaipur and Agra areas, according to Samudragupta's Allahabad inscaiption *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol III p. 8. ed. by Fleet

during that period. The Besnagar inscription which belongs to the 2nd century B.C., identifies Vāsudeva with Kṛṣṇa. It mentions a column with the figure of Garuda on its top as erected by Heliodoros, the son of Dion and an inhabitant of Takṣaśila He is referred as a *Bhāgavata* He came as an ambassador from the court of Antialkides to King Kautsiputra Bhāgabhadra. The column is for Vāsudeva, God of gods[548] It was not erected as a symbol of victory, but as connected with the temple of Viṣṇu situated on the spot Perhaps there was a temple of Vāsudeva which required a column, and that was raised by Heliodoros.

Another inscription, of the first century B C., has been found at Ghosundi in Rajasthan. It refers to the construction of a stone-enclosure called *Nārāyaṇavāṭaka* for the images of Vāsudeva and Saṃkarṣaṇa by a devotee of Śiva who performed the *aśvamedha*

Vide

कारितोऽयं राज्ञा भागवतेन गाजायनेन पाराशरीपुत्रेण सर्वतातेनाश्वमेधयाजिना भगवद्भ्यां संकर्षणवासुदेवाभ्यामनिताभ्यां सर्वेश्वराभ्यां पूजाशीलाप्रकारो नारायणवाटक .

Sircar : *Select Inscriptions*, pp 91 f.

It is found here that both Saṃkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva had temples and enclosures in stone, implying their worship. The temples or at least the images of the two deities should have already been there. The word 'Saṃkarṣaṇa' which occurs here as the first member of a compound of the *dvandva* type has no sanction according to the rules of grammar, since Vāsudeva is held to be more worthy of respect than Saṃkarṣaṇa. Perhaps, Saṃkarṣaṇa is here to be taken to refer to Balarāma, elder brother of Kṛṣṇa, and so he is to be treated with greater respect.

548. Sircar · *Select Inscriptions*, I, p. 90.
Epigraphica Indica, Vol.X, No.669.

There is an inscription[549] belonging to the first century A.D. at Morawell, seven miles west of Mathura. It is called Saudas and records the installation of five *vīras* by a lady called Tosa. The five *vīras* are taken by Luders to be Baladeva, Akrūra, Anādhṛṣṭi, Saraṇa and Vidūratha[550] T N. Banerjee identifies them as Saṁkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Sāmba and Aniruddha[551] This evidence is not in favour of the prevalence of the *Pāñcarātra* It is only the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* that admits the concept of the *pancavīras*[552] Even the opinion of Luders does not support any *Āgama* tradition.

To the first century A.D belongs the Nanaghat cave inscription (Bombay State) of Naganikā, the Śatavāhana queen[553] It contains the expression, *"Namo saṁkarṣaṇa-vāsudevānām."* Naganikā's husband performed a number of sacrifices, including the *aśvamedha*. The position of the word 'Saṁkarṣaṇa' as the first member of the compound is to be justified in the same way as in the Ghosundi inscription

The inscription of Pravarasena II in the 18th year of his reign and those of Skandagupta and the copper plate grant of Prabhāvatī Gupta, daughter of Chandragupta II, contain the words '*bhāgavata*', '*paramabhāgavata*', '*bhagavadpādānudhyāta*' and '*atyantabhagavadbhakta*' all of which suggest the prevalence of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines, But it is possible to take the words '*bhagavat*' and '*bhāgavata*' as not referring to any particular *Āgamic* source, but as reverent references to God as Viṣṇu. The *Vaikhānasa* texts use generally the name, 'Viṣṇu', to denote the Supreme Being. They use off and on the name, 'Bhagavān', also to refer to Him.[554] And so the words, '*bhagavat*' and '*bhāgavata*', need not be from the *Pāñcarātra* exclusively.

549 *Epigraphica Indica* Vol.XXIV, p. 194.
550. Luder's *Inscriptions*.
551. T.N Banerjee
552. *KA*. XXX 130b-131.
553, Sircar: *Select Inscriptions* I, p. 186.
554. *VK*. pp. 507, 508; *SA*. Appendix II, 1.89.

Finally, the *Bhāṇa, 'Pādatāḍitaka'* of Śyāmilaka refers to a temple of Pradyumna.

Vide .

एष खलु प्रद्युम्नदेवायतनस्य वैजयन्तामभिलिखति

(p 24)

The word, *'devāyatana'* shows that worship of Pradyumna was in vogue in the seventh century A.D.[555] There seems no other reference to a separate temple for Pradyumna.

As there is not any serious objection to admit that the composition of the *Mahābhārata* and the beginning of the Kaliyuga almost coincided, doctrines of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*, as they are treated in the *Śāntiparvan* of the epic, could not be later than this date. Due respect should be given to the tradition which mentions that the doctrines recorded in the version received by Nārada, were revealed for the seventh time, and that they were originally preached in the Kṛtayuga To the sophisticated mind of the modern scholars, such an ancient date for these doctrines, or as a matter of fact for any aspect of Hindu culture, is not only absurd, unsupported as it is by circumstantial evidence, but also is against the trend of current thinking which assumes civilization to have been preeeded by a period of pre-literate society. The existence of a society in the remote past which could have evolved and nurtured theistic concepts, framed the ways and means of adoring God and developed them through practice, is, according to modern scholars of the West and those of the East who have chosen to

555 Śyāmilaka, the author, could have been a friend of Bāṇabhaṭṭa, the famous prose writer. He was a kinsman of Bāṇa and a great scholar and poet Vide *Harsacarita* III, p 87 He cannot be be identical with Śyāmilaka, the teacher of Mahimabhaṭṭa (1050 A,D.), as he is cited by Abhinavagupta (c 1000 A D) Therefore he may be placed as a contemporary of Bāṇa (c 600 A D) Some scholars place this work before 500 A D.
Vide —Dr Dasaratha Sarma, 'Date of *Pādetāḍitaka*,' Ganganath Jha Research Institute Journal, XIV, Parts 1-4

abide wholly by the verdicts ot the former, opposed to the dictates of reason and thinking. Absence of historical data is, of course, a handicap in arriving at a conclusion on many of these issues On this account, it is not absolutely necessary to discard tradition as baseless. At any rate, the *Mahābhārata* needs to be placed in the remote past, and so the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines could be admitted to have received development about 3000 B C

It will be of interest to note that *Pāñcarātra's* antiquity is borne out also by some literary evidence. Bāṇa, the author of the *Harṣacarita*,[556] is the earliest Sanskrit poet to mention the *Pāñcarātrikas* as the followers of the *Pāñcarātra* system. The *Brahmasūtras*[557] take note of the objection raised against the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* and offer also the refutation of this Śaṅkara[558] (c. 800) is the earliest commentator on the *Brahmasūtras* to offer his views on the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines Utpala's (c. 850 A.D) *Spandapradīpikā*[559] quotes from a *Pāñcarātra śruti* and *Pāñcarātra Upaniṣad*,

Vide :

पाञ्चरात्रश्रुतावपि- यद्वत् सोपानेन प्रासादमारुहेत्
प्लवेन वा नदीं तरेत् तद्वच्छास्त्रेण हि भगवान् शास्ता अवगन्तव्यः ।

p 2

Here 'Śāsta' refers to Viṣṇu.

णकारोऽभयदः शास्ता वैकुण्ठ इति कीर्तितः ।

LT XV 18a

पाञ्चरात्रोपनिषदि च वक्ता च वाच्यं च भोक्ता च भोज्यं च ।

p 40

556 p. 237

557 II. 2, 39-42

558 *Brahmsūtrabhāṣya* on II 2 42-45,

559 Vijayanagar Sanskrit series

Some more passages are also quoted in this work under the general name of *Pāñcarātra*. Names of the texts are also mentioned such as *Jayā*, *Sāttvata*, *Pauṣkara*, *Viṣṇuyāmala*, *Śrīkālparā*, *Vaihāyasa*, *Haṃsapārameśvara*, *Saṁkarṣaṇasūtra* and *Jābālasūtra*

The last-mentioned two works may be taken to suggest that there could have existed in Kashmir some aphorisms of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine associated with the authorship of Saṃkarsana and Jābāli. Perhaps this Saṃkarṣaṇa is the same as the character with this name playing the role of the *Pāñcarātrika* in the *Āgamāḍambara* of Jayanta.[560]

Jayanta (c. 880 A.D) argues in his *Nyāyamañjarī* and *Nyāyakalikā*[561] in favour of the validity of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*. Bhāskara (c. 900 A D) who commented upon the *Brahmasūtras*, was well aware of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine. Rājaśekhara, the reputed dramatist of the same period, refers to the *Vyūha* doctrine of the *Pāñcarātra* system.

Vide ·

नाद्यन्तवन्तः कवयः पुराणाः सूक्ष्मा बृहन्तोऽप्यनुशासितारः ।
सर्वंज्वरान् घ्नन्तु ममानिरुद्धप्रद्युम्नसंकर्षणवासुदेवाः ॥

Kāvyamīmāṃsā (G.O.S.) p. 38.

However, Somadeva Sūri who flourished about 950 A.D. does not mention the *Pāñcarātra* system and its doctrines, while he takes care to refer to the doctrines of the systems of thought with which he was familiar then. It will not be wrong to infer that the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines were not so well known in all parts of India, particularly in Deccan.[562]

560, *Āgamāḍambara*, Acts III & V.

561. *Nyāyamañjarī* (Chaukhamba edn.) pp. 241-242.
Nyāyakalikā, pp. 3-4

562 See Handique : '*Yaśastilaka* and Indian Culture' p. 364.

However, they were fully known and the texts wherein these were treated were also quite familiar to Yāmuna (916-1041 A D) who lived in the south and wrote his *Āgama-prāmāṇya* 563 in which the *Ekāyana* recension of the *Veda* is said to have been proved to be not of human origin. The wording in the text of Yāmuna may permit the interpretation that this was written by Yāmuna himself 564 It may also be taken to have been the work of a writer in Kashmir It is thus evident that the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines are very ancient and their popularity for religious practice and philosophical thinking is attested by many writers from about the beginning of the Christian era.

Aparārka, the author of a commentary on the *Yājñavalkya Smṛti*, attests to the authority of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* and declares that its validity could not be questioned 565

Regarding the exotic origin of this *Āgama* suggested by some scholars, it must be said that there is partial justification for this. From the account contained in the *Śāntiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*, it is found that the doctrines represented the seventh version when they were received by Nārada from the Lord in the Śvetadvīpa. This island is stated to lie somewhere in central Asia, near Pamir mountains Whether Nārada paid his visit to this island towards the close of Dvāparayuga cannot be easily decided Bhīṣma is simply repeating an account of Nārada's visit This version, like many of the *Itihāsas* and genealogical accounts included in the *Mahābhārata*, must be of very ancient origin. The date or dates of these cannot be settled for want of evidence. They may have been composed even when the sacrifices were popular, and so could

563 p. 89.

564 Van Buitenen holds this view. See *ibid*. note 300.

565. *Ācārādhyāya*, *śloka* 7.

be placed at least when the *Kalpasūtras* were framed though not before that period. Besides, the previous versions of the doctrines are not stated to have been released from Śvetadvīpa. Again, there is no evidence to prove that the frontiers of ancient India did not extend to the west and north-west beyond the present limits. With the present state of knowledge regarding the various pieces of evidence, it is too early to be dogmatic about whether or not the *Pañcarātra* traditions and doctrines are of foreign or indigenous origin.

CHAPTER VI

PĀÑCARĀTRA ĀGAMA DOCTRINES

The *Pāñcarātra* system is called also as the *Sāttvataśāstra.* There are other systems also having the name '*Pāñcarātra*' with some attributes, such as '*Gaṇeśapāñcarātra*', '*Devīpāñcarātrā*' and others[566] There is also a system called '*Saptarātra*'

Vide :

विष्ण्वादीनां प्रतिष्ठादि वक्ष्ये ब्रह्मन् शृणुष्व मे ।
प्रोक्तानि पञ्चरात्राणि सप्तरात्राणि वै मया ॥

Agnipurāṇa XXXIX-1

In all these cases the word '*rātra*' must be taken to stand for day and night (*ahorātra*) This indicates that the explanation for the name '*Pāñcarātra*' should be traced to sources other than that which is suggested by Prof Buitenen.

Many a stream of thought has converged to form a synthesis to serve as a basis for the edifice of the *Pāñcarātra* system. The Vedic concept of ritual gives the religious background for offering worship. The Paurāṇic theory of Brahmā as the creator brings in the creation of the cosmic embryo and his birth there as the Hiraṇyagarbha That the Ultimate Reality is partless, subtle and manifests itself in the form of the world is traceable to the contents of the *Upaniṣads* The principles of the evolution of matter into the world are incorporated to explain the process of material creation which is based on the Sāṇkhya system. The disciplines of meditation are derived from the Yogi system The manifestation of the Ultimate Reality in the form of sentient and insentient beings, the worship of the Deity mentally and outwardly, the installation of idols, the elaborate procedure for

566 Including the *Saptarātra*, seven kinds of *Pāñcarātra* are known. Vide *Nāradapāñcarātra* I. 1. 56-57.

the construction of the temple and the conduct of festivals owe their origin to *Āgama* traditions. These sources have been fully utilised to blend harmoniously and carry out the one purpose of serving God

The *Pāñcarātra* texts are called *Upaniṣads* and *Saṃhitās* to indicate the Vedic foundations,[567] for this *Āgama* is based on the *Ekāyana* recension also called *Mūlaśākhā* and *Śuklayajuś-śākhā* It belongs to the *Kāṇva* recension of the *Śuklayajurveda*.[568] Why it is called *Mūlaśākhā* is clear from the following passage:

महतो वेदवृक्षस्य मूलभूतो महानयम् ।
स्कन्धभूता ऋगाद्यास्ते शाखाभूतास्तथा मुने ॥
जगन्मूलस्य देवस्य वासुदेवस्य धीमतः ।
प्रतिपादिकता सिद्धा मूलवेदाख्यता द्विज ॥

PārS 1. 76-77; *IS*. I 24.

The *Āgama* is also known as *Siddhānta* It is of four kinds, according to the nature of the deities to be worshipped. They are *Āgamasiddhānta*, *Mantrasiddhānta*, *Tantrasiddhānta* and *Tantrāntarasiddhānta*[569] Another list mentions *Mantrasiddhānta* as the first to be followed by *Āgamasiddhānta*[570]. According to the *Āgamasiddhānta*, worship is to be offered to the four *vyūhas*. Worship of Keśava, Nārāyana and others, representing the twelve forms of the Lord, comes under the *Mantrasiddhānta*. Worship of a single form is enjoined in the *Tantrāntarasiddhānta*. The *Tantrāntarasiddhānta* prescribes the worship of forms like Narasiṃha and others.[571] The *Hayagrīvasaṃhitā* mentions that

567 *VS* II. 11, *IS*. XXI. 554, Vide *Pas* I. 71, Colophon *Ibid*, *Mbh*. *Śānti* ccclviii 63

568 Nageśa *Kānvaśakhāmahimasaṅgraha*. Tri. Cat. III. IB. p. 3229.

569. *IS*. XXI. 560-561. Cf. *Paus*. XXXVIII 294-309, *LT*. XL. 100.101,

570 *Pārs* I 76. 77, *Pās* I. 80-83

571 *Pās* IV 4 19,

the *Āgamasiddhānta* is helpful in getting *mokṣa*, the *Mantrasiddhānta* gives the fruits of undertakings and *moksa*, the *Tantrasiddhānta* grants the four kinds of objects in life and the *Tantrāntara* grants desired results [572]

The *Sāttvata* system is classified under ten heads, each having the name *Saṁhitā* They are *Bhagavatsamhitā*, *Karmasaṁhitā*, *Vidyāmayī Saṁhitā*, *Kālasaṁhitā*, *Kartavyasamhitā*, *Vaiśeṣikī* (*Saṁhitā*), *Saṁyamasaṁhitā*, *Adhikārasaṁhitā*, *Mārgasaṁhitā* and *Mokṣasamhitā* [573] These do not seem the independent names of any texts or systems, but only ten topics which are dealt with in the system They could be identified as those treating about the nature of God, acts of worship, knowledge of *tattva*, time (for worship), rituals (which are to be done from time to time), specific acts, *yoga*, qualifications for initiation, and the means of *moksa* respectively.

A system can deal with what is wholesome to man by prescribing the means to get rid of worldly misery. It is necessary to find out the means which would provide man with this *Tattvajñāna* and *karma* are considered to be the two means which help in obtaining what is beneficial to man *Karma* is twofold, according as it leads directly or indirectly to *tattvajñāna* The actual worship which is offered to the Lord is the direct means, while others which contribute to it are the indirect ones. The *Sāttavata* system is concerned with the direct method of worship and, as such, is considered the best among the systems [574]

The Ultimate Reality in the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* is *Brahman* characterised by bliss and free from all undesirable qualities.

572. *PR.* pp. 96-97 for an attempt at reconciling the conflicting views.

573. *AhS* XII 45-48a

574 *Ibid*, XIII 7-23.

Vide :

आनन्दलक्षणं ब्रह्म सर्वहेयविवर्जितम् ।

JS. 4. 60 ; *PāS*. I. 5. 29-40.

It is beyond the reach of all beings. Out of this issues the first form of God,

(रूपमाद्यं सनातनम्)

called Vāsudeva in the subtle form with two hands, crystal-like in complexion and clad in a yellow garment.[575] It is seated in the heart of beings[576] and is the highest light seen by Brahmā in meditation

From this Sūksma Vāsudeva, there rise the four-armed Sthūla Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa. The Sthūla Vāsudeva is also known as Para Vāsudeva from whom springs Vyūha Vāsudeva. Samkarsana emerges from Vyūha Vāsudeva, Pradyumna from Saṁkarṣaṇa and Aniruddha from Pradyumna. The four *vyūhas* comprising Vyūha Vāsudeva, Saṁkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha constitute *Caturbrahman*, and they together with Para Vāsudeva form *Pañcabrahman*[577]

The word '*brahman*' which is derived from the root, '*bṛh*', meaning to increase, to grow, is taken to mean the unlimited nature of the attributes and of essential nature (*svarūpa*)[578] This word is used to denote all the above-mentioned emanations of the Ultimate Reality. In particular,

575 *Ibid* XLIV. 22b-24 ; 28a , *Viṣṇutilaka* II 10 , *Vihagendrasaṁhitā* II.16.

576 *PāS* I 2 16, 17.

577 *Ibid* I 2 13-15 , *AhS* XVI 83b, 84

578 Vide

सर्वत्र बृहत्वगुणयोगेन हि ब्रह्मशब्दः ।
बृहत्त्वं स्वरूपेण गुणैश्च यत्रानवधिकातिशयं सोऽस्य मुख्योऽर्थः ।

Śrībhāṣya, I. 1. 1.

it is employed to refer to the subtle and gross forms called Vāsudeva, Para-vāsudeva, Vyūha-vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa. 'Bhagavān', 'Vāsudeva', 'Viṣṇu' and 'Nārāyaṇa' are generally deemed to indicate one and the same Supreme Being.

Lakṣmī is ever with *Brahman*. She is the state of existence (*bhāva*), and Nārāyana, identical with *Brahman*, is the existent reality The two together constitute *Brahman*.

Vide :

भवन्नारायणो देवो भावो लक्ष्मीरहं परा ।
लक्ष्मीनारायणाख्यातमतो ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥

LT. II. 15.

In this state, she is not differentiated from Him and is said to constitute with Him the non-dual *Brahman*. She is called also by the name of Śakti.

Vide :

अपृथग्भूतशक्तित्वात् ब्रह्माद्वैतं तदुच्यते

Ibid. II 11a

The two are inseparably linked with each other, and so one cannot exist without the other. The relationship between the two may be said to be one of identity.

Vide :

अन्योन्येनाविनाभावादन्योन्येन समन्वयात् ।
तादात्म्यं विद्धि संबन्धं मम नाथस्य चोभयोः ॥

Ibid. II 17b-18a.

The ultimate nature of *Brahman* and Lakṣmī is that of knowledge.

Vide

ज्ञानात्मकं परं रूपं ब्रह्मणो मम चोभयोः

Ibid. II. 25b.

Laksmī is known by several names such as Ānandā, Svatantrā, Śrī, Padmā, Kamalā, Kundalinī, Anāhatā, Gaurī, Gāyatrī, Śivā, Tārā, Ratī and others [579] *Brahman* is called by several names such as Paramātman, Bhagavān, Vāsudeva, Ananta, Prabhava, Hiraṇyagarbha, Śivā and others [580] That Śrī and Viṣṇu alone are meant by these receives elucidation from the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* which declares that every male being represents Viṣṇu and every female Śrī.[581]

Though real identity and non-duality are predicated between Laksmī and Viṣṇu in these texts, yet the two are stated to be different in order to preserve the transcendental character of Viṣṇu. She is said to represent the attribute (*dharma*) of Viṣṇu who possesses it (*dharmin*)

Vide :

देवाच्छक्तिमतो भिन्ना ब्रह्मणः परमेष्ठिनः ।
एष चैषा च शास्त्रेषु धर्मं धर्मिस्वभावतः ॥
भवद्भावस्वरूपेण तत्त्वमेकमिवोदितौ ।

AhS III. 25, 26a.

Brahman is held to be attributeless, which means that It does not have any attribute which is of the material kind.[582] This does not mean that God does not have any *gunas* *Brahman* has indeed the six qualities, namely, *jñāna*, *aiśvarya*, *bala*, *vīrya*, *śakti* and *tejas* Of these, *jñāna* is a non-inert, eternal and self-luminous quality *Aiśvarya* is lordship, which is an activity that is unchecked and is not dependent on anything external to it. *Bala* is strength which is defined as absence of fatigue. *Vīrya* is virility which is unchanging, in spite of being the

579. *AhS*. III. 7-24.
580. *Ibid*. II. 26b-40
581. *VP*. I 8. 35.
582 *Ahs* II, 55

material cause. *S'akti* is potency which becomes the material cause of the world. *Tejas* is splendour or might, which is capable of inflicting defeat on others without any external help.[583] These six *guṇas* make up the body of Vāsudeva and Lakṣmī.

Vide·

षाड्गुण्यविग्रहं देवं तादृश्या च श्रिया युतम् ।

AhS. VI. 25a.

The Lord is called Bhagavān, because He has the six *guṇas* [584] *Brahman* is described as *Sadguṇa*,[585] having these six as essential qualities This is not surprising, since this depiction is based on Upanisadic passages like

आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् ।[586]

which illustrate the *Brahmasūtra*.

तद्गुणसारत्वात्तु तद्व्यपदेशः प्राज्ञवत् ।[587]

The Upaniṣadic doctrine[588] that *Brahman* has no limitations due to space, time and objects is accepted by the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* also. There is a brilliant description of this in the following *śloka* :—

वर्तमानं न तद् ब्रह्म नातीतं नैव भावि तत् ।
अग्रतः पृष्ठतो नैव नोर्ध्वतः पार्श्वयोर्द्वयोः ॥

AhS II. 47

Colours, dimensions, sizes, conditions, temperatures and movements are all shown in the succeeding *śloka* to demonstrate the unconditioned nature of *Brahman*.

583. *Ibid.* II 56-60a ; *LT.* II 26-36a.
584. *Ibid* II 28a , *LT* XXIX. 7 ; XXXVIII. 23 ; XXIX. 11.
585. *Ibid.* II. 53b , *LT.* X. 5.
586 *TV* III. 6
587. *Br S.* II 3 29
588. *TV.* II. 1.

Thirtyfive principles or categories (*tattvas*) are stated to be admitted in the *Sāttvata* system [589] They are God, supramundane space,[590] *puruṣa*, *śakti*, *niyati*, *kāla*, *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*, *māyā*, *prasūti*, *prakṛti*, *buddhi*, *manas*, *ahaṁkāra*, ten cognitive and conative organs, five subtle and five gross elements Among them, God is referred to as Bhagavān, which implies His possession of the six *guṇas* and all emanations such as *vyūha*, *vibhava* and others The supramundane space is *paramaṃ vyoma* generally referred to by the word '*paramākāśa*' [591] and is the place of the Lord *Puruṣa* is Hiraṇyagarbha representing the aggregate of individual selves; he is omniscient and omnipresent and from a part of him all the eternal selves emanate. They get absorbed in him at the time of dissolution.[592] *Śakti* is Lakṣmī [593] *Niyati* is Mahāvidyā,[594] who represents the *sāttvika* form of Śrī [595] and is the source of the world and of speech.[596] *Kāla* is Mahākālī representing the *tāmasa* aspect of Śrī, and it springs from *niyati*,[597] which is only a form of time. While the latter controls and regulates the intellectual abilities and practices of every being, the former takes everything to its stage of fruition [598] *Māyā*, *prasūti* and *prakṛti* are *tamas*, *avyakta* and

589 *LT* VI 42b-44, *PāS* I 8 39-47 enumerate fiftyone categories. This list is vague as it mixes up the products of matter with the names of duties

590 S Gupta (Translation *LT*):—Introduction p. xxiii.

591 *LT* VII 9, *AhS* XLV 16

592 *Ibid* VII 11

593 *Ibid* VII 13a

594 *Ibid* VII 13b

595 *Ibid* V 5,

cf महाविद्यामयी शक्तिर्नियतेर्या महामुने ।
शक्तिर्नाम तदा तां तु प्रसूतीश्वरचोदिता ॥

AhS. IV. 61.

596 *LT* XXVI 25b

597. *Ibid* VII 13b, *AhS*. VI. 46b, 47a, 49.

598. *AhS*. X. 18b.

prakṛti respectively[599] The rest are the same as those dealt with in the *Sāmkhya* system

Brahman is Nārāyaṇa, single, pure and flawless. It is undefinable, matchless, integrated and undifferentiated. It differentiates Itself as the possessor of *S'akti* and as *S'akti* herself[600] *S'akti* is defined as the subtle condition of any thing that exists. It does not exist away from the thing. Its existence there is known only by the effects. Each manifestation of life has a *śakti* inseparably connected with it. There is one omnipresent *S'akti* called Lakṣmī. She is connected with Him as moonlight is with the moon or sunshine with the sun. She differs from Him like the attribute from that which possesses it and existence from that which exists[601] They are inseparable like being and becoming, and I-ness and I[602] Lakṣmī is His essential nature. Like Nārāyaṇa, she too has a form made up of six *guṇas* and so is called Bhagavatī.

Vide ·

पूर्णषाड्गुण्यरूपत्वात्साहं भगवती स्मृता ।

LT. IV. 48a

Like Him, she is transcendental. She acts under His direction. She has no existence apart from Him and at the same time she has an identity of her own.

Vide ·

वासुदेवः परब्रह्म नारायणमयं महत् ।
तस्याहं परमा शक्तिरहन्तानन्दचिन्मयी ॥
भिन्नाभिन्ना च वर्तेऽहं ज्योत्स्नेव हिमदीधितेः ।
तावावां तत्त्वमेकं तु द्विधाभूतौ व्यवस्थितौ ॥

LT XV 9, 10.

599, *LT* VI, 3, *māyā*, *prasūti* and *prakṛti* are represented by *tamas*, *avyakta* and *prakṛti* respectively.

600 *Ibid* VIII 4 8

601. *Ibid* II-11b, 12a ; *AhS*. III.2, 6.

602 *LT*. II 17a.

Creation, protection, destruction, obstruction and showing grace are stated to be the five functions of God[603] and are also declared to be those of Lakṣmī[604] It must be understood that without Lakṣmī (Śakti), the Ultimate Reality is incapable of doing anything, nor can she do anything without Him[605] Logically, whatever activity takes place in the attribute is taken as happening in the *dharmin* also. So whatever Lakṣmī does is attributed to Viṣṇu Himself It is in this light that the sense of the passages mentioning the same five functions as being undertaken by both Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī should be understood.

Vide

व्यापारस्तस्य देवस्य साहमस्मि न संशयः ।
मया कृतं हि तत्कर्म तेन तत्कृतमुच्यते ।
अहं हि तस्य देवस्य स्मृता व्याप्रियमाणता ॥

L.T. XI. 6b, 7.

It is thus found that Śakti which is latent in the Ultimate Reality is taken in the *Vaiṣṇava Āgamas*, including *Vaikhānasa*,[606] as identical with Śrī and called by several names such as Māyā, Prakṛti, Lakṣmī and others. In the emanations, it is manifested and is never dissociated from Viṣṇu This concept is opposed to that of the *Sāṅkhya* system in which matter (*prakṛti*) is distinct from *puruṣa* (the individual self) and is inert. It is animate, and from it arise the selves and the material world.[607] Its non-separation from Viṣṇu is helpful in maintaining Viṣṇu as the material cause of the world That *Brahman* Itself changes into the world is against the unchanging nature of *Brahman*. Lakṣmī is the *dharma* of *Brahman*, and she is identical with

603. *AhS* XIII. 15a
604 *Ibid* XXI-13a , *LT.* XII. 13, 14
605 *LT* II. 18b, 19a.
606 S'akti is S'rī · vide *AhS* V. 3b-5 , *VK*, pp. 493-4.
607 *LT* VI 36a

prakṛti, and any change occurring there may be attributed to *Brahman*, but it does not occur actually in *Brahman*.

The Ultimate Reality is Vāsudeva called by several names and is tranquil (without activity), changeless and ever-existent[608] It has no limitation of any kind and is the source of very vast divine powers.[609] Śakti, also known as Lakṣmī, is latent in Him.

It is necessary to explain how the worlds have come into being from Him or at His instance, since He is totally inactive. An independent resolve flashes forth in Him who orders the latent Śakti to activate herself, which the Āgamic tradition describes as opening of the eyes. This is like the moon rising out of the ocean It is only the will of *Brahman* to create.

Vide :

उन्मेषस्तस्य यो नाम यथा चन्द्रोदयेऽम्बुधेः ॥
अहं नारायणी शक्तिः सिसृक्षालक्षणा तदा ।
LT. II. 22b-23a.

This Sakti is of two kinds, namely, *kriyā* and *bhūti*[610] The former is action, and it is represented by Sudarśana,[611] the discus of Viṣṇu. The other is becoming, that is, the universe. The former is energy and the latter matter. When *Śakti* is said to become active, what is meant is that Lakṣmī makes her presence felt The *bhūti* part is impelled by *kriyā*, and so the world comes into being

Creation is a continuous process and cannot be uniform in its nature. It must have some stages marked by specific changes

608. *Ibid.* II. 8a.
609. *Ibid.* II. 9a
610. *AhS.* XIV. 7b, 8a.
611. *Ibid.* III 45b.

which occur at long intervals. They are evidenced in the Āgamic tradition by three kinds of creation, called *śuddha* (pure), *miśra* (mixed) and *aśuddha* (impure). It sets in, impelled by some independent resolve of Viṣṇu 612

The *śuddha* creation is so called, because no impurity of matter has any scope to tarnish it. The three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) are not present in *Brahman*, who is hence said to be free from *guṇas*. When there is manifestation of Lakṣmī, there is said to come a stage when the six *guṇas* make their appearance. These *guṇas*, namely, *jñāna*, *aiśvarya*, *śakti*, *bala*, *vīrya* and *tejas*, are non-material. 613

When Śakti becomes active, the six qualities make their appearance. Conjointly, they form the body of Viṣṇu, who gets thereby the name Vāsudeva.614 They work also in groups. *Jñāna*, *aiśvarya* and *śakti* form one group, which is called *viśramabhūmi* 615 *Bala*, *vīrya* and *tejas* constitute another called *śramabhūmi*. This means that the latter group is active, while the former is at rest. The *Pāñcarātra* tradition believes in the mixing up of these two in pairs. That is, *jñāna* and *bala* combine together, *aiśvarya* and *vīrya* became a pair, and *śakti* and *tejas* form into a third group. These three pairs play a prominent part in pure creation

Corresponding to the three pairs of *guṇas*, there arose three beings from Vāsudeva Saṅkarṣaṇa issued forth from Him with *jñāna* and *bala* as his dominant *guṇas*, Pradyumna with *aiśvarya*

612. Vide ;

स्वातन्त्र्यादेव कस्माच्चित् कश्चित् सोन्मेषमृच्छति ।
आत्मभूता हि या शक्तिः परस्य ब्रह्मणो हरेः ॥

AbS. V. 4.

613 *AbS*. V. 15b-16

614. *Ibid* V 26b-29a

615 *LT* IV. 24b

and *vīrya*, and Aniruddha with *śakti* and *tejas*. Each one is Vāsudeva Himself and has all the six qualities, but a set of two *gunas* becomes dominant in each The body of each is made up of the six qualities. The four *vyūhas* are not different from one another.[616]

The emanations of the *vyūhas* are given in different texts in different ways When Śakti opened eyes, that is, began to be active (*unmesa*), which is a stage called *śaktikośa*, there arose Saṅkarṣaṇa representing ego-consciousness. All activities were dormant then Śakti was then Sānkarśaṇī with the names, Śrī and Śāntā possessing *jñāna* and *bala*. The next stage of emanation from Śrī is called Pradyumna, who is Puruṣottama. His consort then is Saraswati, whom Śakti represents, having *vīrya* and *aiśvarya*. Aniruddha is the name of the emanation from Saraswati Śakti represents His consort with the name Rati, having *śakti* and *tejas* Rati is also called Mahālakṣmī. Aniruddha is said to be in the *māyākośa*.[617]

Each *vyūha* had two functions, creative and moral, concerned respectively with the origin of beings and ethical progress Creation is carried on by each with the help of *jñāna*, *aiśvarya* and *śakti*, while *bala*, *vīrya* and *tejas* contribute to ethical progress Creation precedes moral progress. Pure creation precedes other kinds of creation and, as such, the first three *guṇas* function at this stage.

With the emanation of Saṅkarṣaṇa, creation is in its embryonic stage having no internal distinctions,[618] *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* make their appearance with Pradyumna's manifestation. This does not mean that the material world is then produced Only the *Kūṭasthapuruṣa* and *prakṛti* with subtle time (*sūkṣmakāla*) then come into being.[619] These evolve further with the

616 *Ibid* VI 6-18
617 *Ibid* VI 6-18
618 *Ibid* VI 7
619. *Ibid.* VI. 10.

emanation of Aniruddha. Body and soul grow. Matter becomes *vyakta* and gross time (*sthūlakāla*) comes into being.[620] That is, with Aniruddha's emanation begins the stage of mixed creation.

Apart from the work of creation, the three *vyūhas* have control over certain functions, but the texts offer conflicting accounts here Creation, preservation and destruction are respectively under the control of Aniruddha, Pradyumna and Saṅkarsaṇa according to the *Lakṣmī Tantra*[621], while the *Visvaksena Saṁhitā* mentions Aniruddha as the controller of preservation and Pradyumna of creation.[622] This discrepant depiction will have to be explained on the ground that all the four *vyūhas* have all the six qualities. When the interaction of all the six *guṇas* with specific pairs of *guṇas* are taken into account, the attribution of the function of *guṇas* to the *vyūha* in question may lead to ascribing a function different from what it is expected to have

On the ethical side, Saṅkarsana teaches the theoretical side (*śāstra*) of the *Āgama* Pradyumna effects its practice (*kriyā*) and Aniruddha awards the fruits (*kriyāphala*) [623] *Jñāna*,[624] *vīrya* and *tejas* are employed by the three *vyūhas* for these activities Pradyumna introduces all the religious rites to be adopted by the followers of this *Āgama*, while Aniruddha preaches about the science of the soul.[625]

520 *Ibid* VI 24-28

621 *Ibid* IV 19, but the reverse is stated in *Ibid* IV 11, Aniruddha is said to control all the three in *AhS.* LV 21

622 *ViS* mentions control over preservation as the work of Aniruddha and that over creation as that of Pradyumna Schrader. p 38.

623 *AhS* V 21-24, *LT.* IV. 17b-18

624 *Ibid* V 21b, *bala* is also implied here, *LT.* IV. 15a takes it to be only *bala* *AhS* refers to the teaching as the *'aikāntika* mode for getting at the Lord, while *LT* takes it to be *Vedānta*.

625 Schrader p 39.

Another aspect of the three *vyūhas*, which was criticized by Śaṅkara and other writers, has disappeared gradually. The emanation of Sankarṣaṇa from Vāsudeva is depicted as the birth of the self from the Lord. From Saṅkarsaṇa, the self, the mind (or *buddhi*) is born as Pradyumna; and the ego as Aniruddha rises from Pradyumna. The gradual disappearance is stated by F Otto Schrader[626] as traceable to the difficulty of connecting the *ahaṅkāra* with such an absolutely pure being as a *vyūha* It is doubtful whether this explanation is correct The three deities superintend the activities of the soul, mind and ego, which do not belong to the pure creation. This is hinted at in the following passage:—

> संकर्षणाद्यो देवास्त्रय एते पुरातनाः ॥
> जीवो बुद्धिरहंकार इति नाम्ना प्रकीर्तिताः ।
> नैवेते प्राकृता देवाः किन्तु शुद्धचिदात्मकाः ॥
>
> *LT.* VI. 12b, 13.

Apart from the four *vyūhas*, there are sub-*vyūhas*. Keśava, Nārāyaṇa and Mādhava issue forth from Vāsudeva; Govinda, Viṣṇu and Madhusūdana from Saṅkarṣaṇa; Trivikrama, Vāmana and Śrīdhara from Pradyumna; and Hṛṣīkeśa, Padmanābha and Dāmodara from Aniruddha.[627] There is another set of sub-*vyūhas*, according to which, from each *vyūha* four deities arise, each having the same name as the *vyūha* and two from each with different names like Janārdana, Upendra, Hari and others[628]

Under pure creation are included the *vibhavas* of the Lord which represent the divine descents (*avatāras*) of the Lord. Besides the ten well-known descents, there are many which

626. *Ibid* p. 39

627 *AhS.* V, 46-48, *PāS*, I. 2. 22b-25.

628 *PāS*. I 2. 28.

could be considered as sub-*vibhavas*.[629] They are enumerated to be thirtynine in number according to one text and thirtyeight in another[630] Both the lists are identical except for different names for the same deity and the former having an additional deity with the name, 'Śāntātman' Kapila, Rāhujit, Kālanemighna, Pārijātahara, Dattātreya, Nara, Nārāyaṇa, Hari and others are some well-known descents of God. Names like Sanaka, Sanandana, Śuka and Śaunaka in the list, belong to pious men who have God's power infused into them. The *Padma Saṁhitā*[631] has the thirtynine descents named differently. Purusottama, Buddha, Dāśārha, Śauri, Hayagrīva, Vaikuṇṭha, Śakra, Śrīvatsa, Viṣvaksena and others are enumerated under this head.

It is interesting to note in this connection that among these sub-*vibhavas*, Puruṣa, Satya and Acyuta are mentioned as emanating from Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha respectively[632] That means that the emanation is in the order from Vāsudeva to Saṅkarsaṇa to Pradyumna and Puruṣa, from Pradyumna to Aniruddha and Satya, and from Aniruddha to Acyuta. The *Jayākhya Saṁhitā* records that *Parabrahman* is Vāsudeva from whom Acyuta takes his emanation. Satya of shining body rises from Acyuta and Puruṣa emanates from Satya. Puruṣa is the inner controller of all beings and is the source of all divine descents. All of them rest in Vāsudeva.[633] The process of emanation from Saṅkarṣaṇa and Aniruddha is reversed in the two lists noted above. The *Sanatkumāra Saṁhitā* states that Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha worship Sadā-

629 *AhS* V 50-57a, *SS* pp 79-80.

630. *LT* XI, 19-25

631. *PāS* I 2 31-37.

632 *Ibid.* I 2 33b-34a, *Nāradīya Saṁhitā*, I. 33-46.

633 *JS* IV 2-14a.

viṣṇu.[634] On the other hand, the *Vaikhānasa* system[635] treats Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha as emanating from Viṣṇu who is named as Ādimūrti, and Vāsudeva, Sankarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Sāmba as five warriors (*vīras*) [636] Thus it is found that the *vyūha* deities of the *Pāñcarātra* get treated as subordinate to the *Pañcamūrtis* in the *Vaikhānasa* and the *Pañcamūrtis* of the *Vaikhānasa* are *vibhavas* in the *Pāñcarātra*. However, the treatment of Puruṣa, Satya and Acyuta as emanations from Vāsudeva in the *Jayākhya Saṃhitā* could not be ignored in the light of the treatment given to them in the other *Pāñcarātra* texts. Perhaps, the *Jayākhāyā* records the oldest aspect of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition which was not totally different from that of the *Vaikhānasa* However, one noteworthy feature is that both the *Āgamas* have recognised the concept of the primary deities in each other, though giving them a subordinate position in their systems.

The divine descents are grouped as primary and secondary [637] The former refer to those concerned with Viṣṇu's descent with non material (*aprākṛta*) body and the latter to those in which the power of Viṣṇu takes possession of the body of a mortal.

In fact, there are three kinds of descents of the Ultimate Reality, namely, the supreme form, the *vyūha* form and the *vibhava* form All-pervasive God takes these forms to help His devotees

Vide:

त्रैरूप्येण जगन्नाथः समुदेति जगद्धिते ।
आद्येन पररूपेण व्यूहरूपेण चाप्यथ ॥
तथा विभवरूपेण नानाभावमुपेयुषा ।
व्यापको भगवान् देवो भक्तानुग्रहकाम्यया ॥

LT X 10, 11.

634 *SKS. Indrarātra*, VII 112-113.

635 *SA*, XXXVII 3-4

636. *KA*. XXX 31.

637 F O Schrader, pp 43-47; *AhS* VIII. 51.

All the descents spring from Aniruddha.[638] Some texts declare that the descents of Matsya, Kūrma and Varāha are from Vāsudeva, those of Narasimha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma and Rāma from Saṅkarṣaṇa, that of Balarāma from Pradyumna and those of Kṛṣṇa and Kalkin from Aniruddha.[639] Another version mentions the descent of Kūrma and Paraśurāma from Saṅkarsaṇa.[640]

In the *Sanatkumārasaṁhitā*, two sets of *vyūha* emanations are depicted.[641] The Supreme Deity is called Sadāviṣṇu, also known as Vāsudeva, from whom there arises another Vāsudeva with a definite form. He is called also Mahāvisnu, From His mind arose the goddess Śānti from whom came Saṅkarsaṇa, the destroyer also known as Śamkara From the left side of Saṅkarsana, there issued forth Pradyumna, also called as Brahmā who created Saraswatī, the goddess of speech Aniruddha, also called Puruṣottama, arose from her. Rati emanated from Him who, lying in the waters, bore a lotus in His navel This represents the subtle kind of *vyūha*.

Then an egg came out of the lotus and Hiraṇyagarbha, identical with the four-faced Brahmā, arose out of it. From him arose a goddess with the name Samdhyā who gave rise to Rudra (also called Satya) and to Marīci and other progenitors (*prajāpatis*). Satyā was born as the daughter of Dakṣa, one of those progenitors. From Satyā arose Acyuta, who is identical with Pradyumna from whom Aniruddha arose. This is the gross *vyūha* emanation.

This version of the *vyūha* doctrines is very significant and of great importance. It accounts for the assumption of more than

638. *Ibid.* p. 48;
639. *PāS.* I 2, 31b-33a.
640. *SKS. Indra* III. 36, 67.
641 *Ibid.* ch. 6

one Vāsudeva and for accomodating the *Pañcaviras* of the *Vaikhānasa* tradition. Besides, Rudra and Śaṁkara and Brahmā and Sarasvati who do not normally have a place in Vaiṣṇavism, are shown to have formed part of the evolution of the *vyūha* doctrines.

There is one more aspect deserving notice in the concept of the *vyūhas* Four states mark out relative activity: and they are the inactive (*śānta*), active (*udita*), spasmodically active (*śāntodita*) and constantly active (*nityodita*). Para Vāsudeva represents the inactive state, while the *vyūha* shows the active state. The third stage is represented by Vyūha Vāsudeva, and the remaining three emanations of Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha belong to the last stage.[642]

Inanimate objects also get treated as God Himself Viṣṇu is omnipotent, and so can descend into the images made of metal, stone or mud. In His *vibhavas*, He gets down with a portion of His *śakti*. Similarly, He occupies the images which are consecrated and installed. It is the request and prayer of the suffering humanity that makes Him come down (*avatāra*) into this world. He removes the sufferings and then quits the earth to get back to His own abode. The case of the images is slightly different. The devotee yearns to have His vision and be with Him. For this purpose, the Lord gets down into the images and stays on there, so that even after the passing away of that devotee, He continues to be present there. This descent is technically called *arcā*. The body of God in this form is also non-material (*aprākṛta*).

642 *LT* II. 51 ; vide

सुषुप्तीत्यादि । सङ्कर्षणप्रद्युम्नानिरुद्धानां सुषुप्त्याद्यधिष्ठातृत्वम् । वासुदेवस्तु तुरीयाधिष्ठातेति विवेकः । अयमेव विभागः माण्डूक्योपनिषदि विश्वतैजसप्राज्ञतुर्यनामभिर्निर्दिष्टः ।

Com. on *Ibid.*

Vide :

अर्चापि लौकिकी या सा भगवद्भावितात्मनाम् ,
मन्त्रमन्त्रेश्वरन्यासात्सापि षाड्गुण्यविग्रहा ॥

LT II 59b-60a.

देवर्षिपितृसिद्धाद्यैः स्वयं वा जगतां हिते ।
निर्मितं भगवद्रूपमर्चा सा शुद्धचिन्मयी ॥

Ibid IV 31.

A question is likely to be raised here regarding the propriety of accepting the form in the image made of material products, as non-material. The answer to this lies in the admission of a body for God in His divine descents such as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and others Both the material (*prākṛta*) and non-material (*aprākṛta*) worlds belong to Viṣṇu He whose body is made up of the six *guṇas*, takes up a body which falls within the experience of the selves In this, His compassion and will are the guiding factors.[643] As He is ever absolutely free from those factors which are to be shunned, the products, made up of matter with its three *guṇas*, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, could not have any effect on Him Even though He took His abode in a physical body when He descended down as Rāma or Kṛṣṇa, His body did not have any of the blemishes associated with the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*.. Similarly, He is said to take His place in the idol which is consecrated according to Āgamic traditions, and as such the idol becomes fit to be worshipped. It is not a stone or metallic form that is then God, but it is the figure which is to be looked upon as non-material in its making Hence the idol is called as the seat of the auspicious one (*śubhāśraya*) and a divine and auspicious form (*divyamaṅgalavigraha*) His body is the resting place of the material products.

643 Vide

शान्तसंवित्स्वरूपस्तु भक्तानुग्रहकाम्यया ।
अनौपम्येन वपुषा ह्यमूर्तो मूर्तितां गतः ॥

IS, II, 91,

Vide :

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।
अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥

Bhagavadgītā, XI. 13.

Since His descent both in the *vibhava* and *arcā* forms is not due to *karma*, the body which He takes then cannot be the product of matter.

Vide

न भूतसङ्घसंस्थानो देहोऽस्य परमात्मनः ।

Mbh. Śānti. CCVI. 60

न तस्य प्राकृता मूर्तिर्मांसमेदोऽस्थिसंभवा ।

Varāha Purāṇa XXXIV. 40

His body in the *vyūha*, *vibhava* and *arcā* manifestations has to be taken as non-material in its composition. The solution to this question is thus summarized

Vide ·

श्रीपते र्व्यूहविभवार्चावतारतया सतः ।
अप्राकृतशरीराणि प्रतिष्ठानन्तरं हरेः ॥
प्रसादोन्मुखतापत्तौ प्रकटानि भवन्ति हि ।
तच्च प्रकटनं तस्य संकल्पाधीनमीर्यते ॥
प्राकृताप्राकृततनुः संसर्गः कथमित्यलम् ।
रामकृष्णाद्यवतारादौ दृष्टत्वात्तस्य भूयसा ॥

Vedānta Kārikāvalī VI. 8 10.

The Lord is said to be the Inner Ruler (*Antaryāmin*) of all selves and is present in the heart of each of them This concept is based on the *Upaniṣads* which declares that *Brahman* is within every object and every self and controls them from within.[644]

644. Vide :

अन्तः प्रविष्टः शास्ता

T. A. II. 11. 3.

But He is unsullied by the impurities of the physical frames within which the self rests from birth to death.

In the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*. Lakṣmī occupies a very prominent place. She is Śakti lying undeveloped in Viṣṇu before creation. When Viṣṇu takes His descents, she also descends along with Him. The two are inseparable.

Vide:

स प्रदेशो न तस्यास्ति येन भूतं मया विना ।
स प्रदेशो न मे कश्चिद्विना तद्येन भूयते ॥

LT VIII. 10.

When He is to play His own role, she manifests His nature. When she in turn has her role, He manifests His I-ness (*ahantā*) in her. When both have to function, they present themselves as the existent reality and its state of existence.[645] When Aniruddha plays His role, she becomes known as Kamalā. These two become the parents of the universe.[646] She is called Śrī when she occupies the lap of the two-armed Vāsudeva. She is also present on His sides with the names of Śrī and Puṣṭi.[647] She takes several forms and occupies various positions around Viṣṇu assuming particular names in each position.[648] She becomes Gaṅgā flowing out of the feet of Viṣṇu when He assumes the form of Trivikrama. In His descents as Varāha, Dharma, Vāmana, Paraśurāma and Rāma, she came down as Bhū, Bhārgavī, Padmā, Dharaṇī and Sītā respectively. With Kṛṣṇa who was with Balarāma, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, she

645 *LT*, VIII 13-15

646 *Ibid* VIII 16-17.

647 *Ibid* VIII 21

648 *Ibid* VIII. 22-34a.

became Rukmiṇī, Revatī, Rati and Uṣā respectively.[649]. That the Supreme Being has for His consort Śrī, otherwise called Lakṣmī, is reiterated in many contexts in the *Pāñcarātra* texts, which do not fail to note that she is a form of Śakti, and that many goddesses in the form of Śakti form her retinue [650] In this manner Śrī also is taken to be present along with Viṣṇu in His *vyūha*, *vibhava*, *arcā* and *antaryāmin* forms assuming different names All these four are held as the divine descents of the Lord and so include the forms of Śrī. Her forms also are not made of material products. These descents are intended to be meditated upon by the selves. There is no other purpose to be served in the awakening (*unmeṣa*) of Śakti.

To the pure creation belongs Vaikuṇṭha which is also known as the Highest Place (*Parama Pada*) and which is beyond the sphere of the cosmic egg. It is also called the *Tripādvibhūti* of Viṣṇu where three fourths of God's manifestation are present, while a quarter of it represents the cosmic egg in which Aniruddha functions as creator It comes into existence along with the *vyūhas* and merges into the Lord at the time of the Great Dissolution. It is also called *Nityavibhūti* which is an eternal manifestation in the sense that it is not created. It is distinct from the created world which is called *Līlāvibhūti* [651]

649. *Ibid* 34b-35a , 38b-40a , 41b ; 46a

650. *AhS.* VI 25 , IX 31 , XXVIII 85 ; XXXVI. 50.

651 The distinction and classification of *vibhūti* as *nitya* and *līlā* must be of later development The word, ' *mahāvibhūti* ', occurs in *LT* XVII 6. and this may be taken to imply the above-mentioned classification

Vide ·

महाविभूतिः नित्यविभूतिः । "त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि"
इत्युक्तरीत्या लीलाविभूत्यपेक्षया तस्य महत्त्वात् महाविभूतित्वम् ।

Com. on *Ibid.*

The Highest Place is reached by the souls which get absolutely free from worldly bondage There they are held to enjoy several kinds of communion with God.[652] To be the abode of free selves, there must be matter which can provide the places and the means (instruments) of enjoyment (*bhogasthāna* and *bhogopakaraṇa*) The enjoyments thus provided are stated to be blissful.[653] Therefore, the *Pāñcarātra Āgamas* admit that the Highest Place comes into existence along with the *vyūhas* and as such belongs to pure creation. The material for this creation is pure *sattva* (*śuddha sattva*). It is not *sattva* taken away from matter which is composed of the three *guṇas*, that is, matter purified by being rid of *rajas* and *tamas*; but it represents the first stage in the evolution when the two other qualities do not emerge. The places, the bodies with which the released souls then get endowed and the enjoyments, are all stated to be of the nature of knowledge and bliss These should therefore be non-material (*aprākṛta*)

It is further held that there is nothing there to become an obstacle to the mental functions of the released souls and that the wishes of those selves get fulfilled invariably. The place is significantly depicted as solidified splendour The heavenly abode, the body of the released soul and the enjoyments, which are described to be of the nature of knowledge and bliss, having no obstruction to the fulfilment of the desires of the selves, must be totally distinct from those made up of and gained through the products of the three *guṇas*. In the latter are found

652 *Sāyujya* is yearned for Vide

अभ्यासात्तद्विष्णुसायुज्ये यत्नं परममास्थितः ।
अभ्यासात्प्रत्ययाः सर्वे जायन्ते मुक्तिहेतवः ॥

Cf *Jitante Stotra*, II 36 *SKS*, *Ṛsi*, III. 97.

653. *AhS* VI, 23b-24a.

objects of three dimensions, the like of which should not be expected in the former. If they are to be admitted there also, then obstructions of all kinds will have also to come in the way of the enjoyment of the released souls Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that pure *sattva* is only self-luminous spiritual knowledge That this should be so is strengthened by the fact that matter emanates from Śakti or Śrī and so cannot have any tinge of material defect in the first stage of its emergence when it gets the name, *śuddha sattva*. This concept makes us understand how, out of it, the non material bodies (*aprākṛta*) emerge for Viṣṇu and others and also for the released souls and the creation of inanimate objects like parks, lotus-tanks and others for their enjoyment All these are spiritual in content and are of the nature of knowledge and bliss.

The Highest Place is called Vaikuṇṭha where is ever present the highest form (*para*) of God. This form is said to be the very first and has two hands From this emanated the four-armed and dark-complexioned God.[654] The latter is generally supposed to be the *para* form with the name Vāsudeva from whom the *vyūhas* and divine descents emerge. He has the selves, matter, *mahat*, *sāttvika* and *tamasa ahaṅkāra*, and others as Kaustuba, Śrīvatsa, Gadā, Śaṅkha, Śārṅga and such other weapons and ornaments[655] Para Vāsudeva is stated to divide Himself into Vyūha Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa[656].

Para Vāsudeva is ever associated with Śrī who is identical with Śakti.[657] She too has a body made up of the six divine *guṇas*.

654 *PāS* I.2 13-15 ; *Viṣṇutilaka*, II. 5.

655. *V P*. I. 22

656. *PāS* I. 2 16,17 , *Viṣṇutilaka* II.11-14 identifies Para with Nārāyaṇa.

657 *LT*. VIII. 21

Vide:

षाड्गुण्यविग्रहं देवं तादृश्या च प्रियया युतम् ।
AhS. VI. 25a.

देव्या लक्ष्म्या समासीनं पूर्णषाड्गुण्यदेहया ।
Ibid. IX. 31a.

According to some versions,[658] Śrī and Bhūmi are the two consorts. This is not borne out by the texts As a part of Śakti, Bhū comes down as the consort of Viṣṇu in his Varāhāvatāra

Vide.

अवतारो हि यो नाम वराहो वेदविश्रुतः ।
तदाहमपि भूर्नाम पृथग्भूता भजाम्यहम् ॥
LT. VIII. 38b-39a.

Śakti assumes several names, one of which is Mahī.[659] In these names, she is present with Para Vāsudeva, and all are to be treated as His consorts [660] Nīlā came to be treated as one of His consorts in later Paurāṇic literature. Nappinnai, a cowherdess, was won in a wager by Kṛṣṇa and came to be known as Nīlā [661] A later *Upaniṣad* named *Nīlā Upaniṣad* deals

658 Viṣṇu is said to have Śrī ever with Him Vide *AhS* VI. 25; IX 31, XXXVI 55 *LT* VIII 21b refers to Śrī and Puṣṭi being on His sides. Śrī herself is said to be Puṣṭi, representing one of the eight forms taken by her, one for each direction of space (*LT* VIII 28). After the Lord rescued the earth from distress, it was raised to the status of His consort and became designated as *Bhūdevī* Puṣṭi, who occupied a place on one side of the Lord, came to be identified with Bhū. *SS* (XII. 165) one of the earliest *Saṃhitās*, refer to Śrī and Puṣṭi and not to Śrī and Bhū. *PārS*. I. 7; *IS* X 2, XIII 179, cf *SprS* XXXIII 53

659 *AhS* III 14a.

660. *Ibid*. XXVIII. 25a, *LT*, VIII. 22-47a

661. *Garuḍapurāṇa*, *Uttarakhaṇḍa*, 19. In Tamil literature, she is called Nappinnai. Vide *Śilappadikāra*, II. 17. 14-16. 24.

with all these aspects of Śakti.[662] Eight Śaktis are often mentioned, named Kirti, Śri, Vijayā, Śraddhā, Smṛti, Medhā, Dhṛti and Ksamā[663] Another list enumerates the names as Laksmi, Sarasvati, Sarvakāmadā, Pritivardhani, Yaśaskari, Śāntidā, Tuṣṭidā and Pusti[664] The *Sāttvatasamhitā* enumerates the names as Lakṣmī, Puṣṭi, Dayā, Nidrā, Ksamā, Kānti, Sarasvati Dhṛti, Maitri Rati, Tuṣṭi and Mati.[665]

Śakti is twofold, namely, Bhūti and Kriya. The word, '*Bhūti*' means 'becoming' and '*Kriyā*' means 'acting' The former is Lakṣmi and it is divided in many ways. The latter is the Sudarśana (discus) of Viṣṇu representing Viṣṇu's will. It is undivided It keeps the former working on from creation till dissolution.

Vide

ऐश्वर्यसंमुखं रूपं भूतिर्लक्ष्मीरितीरिता ।

LT XXIX 9a

तेजोमुखं तु यद्रूपं सा क्रियाशक्तिरुच्यते ।

Ibid XXIX 8a.

निष्क्रिया या क्रियाशक्ति लंक्ष्म्याः सौदर्शनी कला ।

AhS III 45b.

662 Here it is said to have been taught to Vikhanas Cf *KA*. XVI 56-102

663 *Vihagendra Samhitā*, 3 5 cited by Schrader p 55 Lakṣmī, Kīrti, Jayā and Mayā are alone mentioned *JS* VI 77a.. *LT* XX 34b.

Cf *KA* XVI 56b-67a where eight names are enumerated, namely, Bhūmi Sarasvatī, Rati, Prīti, Kīrti, Kānti, Puṣṭi and Tuṣṭi which are called Śakti

Eight Lakṣmis are also enumerated, namely, Mahālakṣmi, Viralakṣmī, Dhanalakṣmi, Santānalakṣmī, Jayalakṣmī, Dhānyalakṣmi, Dhairyalakṣmī, and Rājyalakṣmi. *SprS* XXXIX. 152-157

664 *LT* VIII 25

665. *SS*. IX 85

The *Lakṣmītantra* however treats Kriyāśakti as fourfold, shared by the sun, fire, the moon and Sudarśana [666] The importance of Sudarśana in the doctrinal aspect of the *Pāñcarātra* is very great, as it is evidenced in the treatment of Sudarśana in all aspects like *mantra* and worship in the texts[667] and in the separate shrines for Sudarśana in the South Indian temples dedicated to Viṣṇu.

There is in the Highest Heaven a pillar called Viśākhayūpa or Brahmayūpa. It is an effulgence of light and identical with Bhagavān. It has four faces, each facing one direction. That part which faces the eastern quarter is occupied by Bhagavān Vāsudeva with a white form surpassing the splendour of the sun. The form of Sankarsaṇa whose complexion is similar to the colour of the ruby, occupies the south-facing part. The part facing the west presents Pradyumna whose form is red as if scorched by the hot-rayed sun. Aniruddha, whose complexion is like that of the autumnal sky, occupies the north-facing part. The Supreme Lord, mentioned here as Ādimūrti, is present in all these whose brilliance is equal to that of crores of suns.[668] Further, each part has four divisions, the lowest one occupied by Pradyumna, Sankarsana and Vāsudeva Each *vyūha* represents a state of consciousness Vāsudeva's domain is *turīya* where there is no polarisation, Saṅkarṣana's is *suṣupti*, revealing the first and faint signs of polarisation, Pradyumna's is *svapna* with subtle polarisation and Aniruddha's is *jāgrat* with full but limited polarisation [669] For instance, that part which faces

666 *LT* XXIX,

667 *AhS* XXV-VI, XXXIII, XXXVI-VIII, XLII-IV, XLVIII-L *PaS*. IV. 32, *LT* XXX-I, *PārS*, xxiii-vi.

668 *SS* IV. 12a, *LT*. xi. 9-18, The name 'Ādimūrti' used here suggests that the *Pāñcarātra* tradition represents a continuation of the *Vaikhānasa* tradition which calls the Supreme Lord by this name. *S*4 xxxvii-3b, 4 Cf. *LT* x 24a

669. Sanjukta Gupta. *Lakṣmītantra* Translation. p. 59 fn.

the north has Aniruddha in full prominence, but occupying the bottom, the other three not being as prominent as Aniruddha. Similarly, the western face gives prominence to Pradyumna occupying the second division from the bottom, while the other three do not have that importance. The same must be said of the other two faces. The four states of consciousness (waking, sleeping, dreaming and transcendental) characterise the full faces directed to the north, west, south and east respectively

This pillar is intended to be contemplated upon by devotees according to their capacities. Those who meditate upon the waking state of consciousness, as represented by Aniruddha, are required to treat all the four deities as identical with the Supreme Being Each deity having a distinct character and occupying one face of the column incorporates all the four *vyūhas*. For instance, the form of Aniruddha occupying the face directed to the north must display prominent features like the consort, weapons and ornaments, while those of Pradyumna, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva must reveal similar features as indistinct (*aspaṣṭa*), merely outlined or totally invisible. The western face must have the features of Pradyumna prominently displayed, with those of the other three relatively less prominent Similarly, the south and east-facing portions display the prominent features of Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva repectively, according less importance to those of others.

A meditator is required to contemplate at four stages, starting with that of Aniruddha and the other three as depicted in the north face, and gradually passing through to Pradyumna, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva, keeping all the other three in each Each stage corresponds to another stage in the other set, that is, waking, dream, deep sleep and transcendental. The meditator has to raise himself to that state of consciousness which is represented by the stage concerned. This kind of meditation is called *Cāturātmya Upāsanā*.[670]

670 *LT* xi 9-18, Introduction to *LT.*, p. 25, *AhS.* V. 20b-26a.

An explanation is required to be given about the admission of this Viśākhayūpa as distinct from the four *vyūhas* Just as one step follows another in succession while one walks along, so also one *vyūha* follows another The interval between them is not a void. It is charged with a brilliant energy of God who manifests Himself through it serving for His body. It has the six *guṇas* and is called Viśākhayūpa

Vide:

व्यूहात् व्यूहसमुत्पत्तौ पदाद्यावत्पदान्तरम् ।
अन्तरं सकलं देशं संपूरयति तेजसा ॥
पूजितस्तेजसां राशिरव्यक्तो मूर्तिवर्जितः ।
विशाखयूप इत्युक्तस्तत्तज्ज्ञानादिबृंहितः ॥

LT. XI. 11, 12.

This lustre pervades not only the intervals between the *vyūhas* but also the *vyūhas*. Hence the Viśākhayūpa is distinct from the four *vyūhas* which form part of it and at the same time branch off from it like the branches of a tree [671]

The Visākhāyūpa is also said to represent absolute sound, out of which arise the sounds in the four stages of *nāda*, *bindu*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī*, presided respectively by the *vyūha* deities starting from Vāsudeva [672] This representation is justifiable, because some prominent features of the *vyûha* deities, such as imperceptibility, bare outline, indistinct appearance and full perceptibility, are also the features of sound in these four stages.

The term '*Viśākhayūpa*' is made up of two words, '*viśākha*' and '*yūpa*'. The former denotes that of which the branches are spread out; and in this sense, it has relevance to the word '*yūpa*', which primarily means the sacrificial post.

671 *Ibid* xi 13, 29

672 *Ibid* xi 17-30.

The sense of the compound word must be taken as 'that which has all-pervading lustre out of which the *vyūhas* extend on the four sides' It is thus the source and must be taken to stand for Para Vāsudeva or rather to *Param Brahman*, that is, Śrī Krsna Vāsudeva and Sthūla Vāsudeva taken collectively. This Deity is identified with Purusa who is none other than Nārāyaṇa. The *Puruṣasūkta* speaks of creation as a symbolic sacrifice. The same principle is applicable to the concept of the Viśākhayūpa, where the Supreme Being is in the form of lustre without a body, and represents the sacrificial pillar. The word, '*viśākha*', must by taken to mean a particular form taken up by that pillar Primarily it stands for the name of "one of the lunar asterisms (figured by a decorated gateway or arch and containing four or originally two stars placed under the regency of a dual divinity)".[673]

Thus, including the Viśākhayūpa, there are five deities. They represent the five letters *śa*, *ṣa*, *sa*, *ha*, and *kṣa*.

Vide :

हात् सात् षात् शात्ततः शब्दच्छकयूष्माण उदीरिताः ॥
चातुरात्मयमिदं प्रोक्तं चतुर्ब्रह्मेति शब्दितम् ।
क्षेण कूटेन संयोगात् पञ्चब्रह्मेति शब्दितम् ॥
अस्तु सत्यस्य बीजं प्रोक्तः सात्त्वतशासने ।

AhS XVI. 83b-85

It is held by some scholars that the Viśākhayūpa concept was evolved to fill in the central places when the four *vyūha* deities got their assigned places, one in each quarter, and that this, along with the four *vyūha* deities, would justify the significance of the number five occurring in the name of *Pāñcarātra*.[674]

673. M M Williams: *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, pp. 941-2.

674 S Gupta: *LT* translation. Ch. xi. (also Cf. *Brahmavidyā*, xxv 3 & 4, pp, 189-204).

However, this explanation seems unnecessary. Firstly, it must be admitted that the Viśākhayūpa concept is evolved more to help concentration of the mind for contemplation than for explaining the *vyūha* concept The meditation is not simply on a lustrous pillar On the other hand, each deity of the *vyūha* is to be meditated upon as forming part of the whole *vyūha* The Viśākhayūpa may be taken to stand for Para Vāsudeva who does not form part of the *vyūha*, and four stages of consciousness are alone mentioned here for meditation upon the four *vyūha* deities and not five Secondly, the analogy from the *Vaikhānasa* text is interesting. No doubt, the *vyūha* principle is involved in the emanation of Puruṣa from Viṣṇu, to be followed by those of Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha But all the five are together called Pañcamūrti,675 and not as *vyūha*. Lastly, in all religious schools, each number has a significant role to play. For instance, "*ekameva advitīyam brahma*"676 shows the importance of the number one in the *Vedānta* system, This is not taken to mean the denial of duality or of the concept of *tattvatraya*, of the *vyūha* concept of four deities, or of the fivefold classification of the day and so on. Of course, the name, '*Pāñcarātra*' has a unique significance, but the importance given to other numbers like four in the number of *vyūhas*, six in the number of *guṇas* and the *ṣaḍakṣara-mantra*, eight in the *aṣṭākṣara-mantra* and twelve in the *dvādaśākṣara-mantra* are not of less significance. The Viśākhayūpa is a *cāturātmya* concept and does not involve an independent fifth principle brought in there

All these form part of pure creation which is non-material (*a-prākṛta*), and if some of them have found room in the world created out of matter in the process of 'impure' creation, it must be understood that the purity of these is not affected in the least

675 *SA* xxxvii 2.

676. *Ch. Up.* VI. 2, 1.

Based on pure creation is the impure-and-pure creation which comprises both the pure and what is different from it, *Kūtastha Puruṣa* and *Māyā Śakti* represent the manifestation of the *Bhūti Śakti* under this creation. *Kūtastha Purusa* represents an aggregate of souls similar to a bee-hive — souls which have been affected by the impress of deeds done from beginningless time[677] Another version makes this the all-knowing person at the top of the enjoyers who go forth from him at the time of creation and return to him at the time of dissolution[678] Though pure in themselves, these selves become impure on account of *karmavāsanā*[679] The rise of the *Kūtastha Purusa* from Pradyumna is depicted much in the same way as creation is described from the *Puruṣa* in the *Puruṣasūkta*[680]

Along with the *Kūtastha Puruṣa*, the *Māyā Śakti* which is non-spiritual energy, comes into existence It is the primitive form of matter. It is of three kinds, *Niyati* (restriction), *Kāla* (time) and *Guna* (quality)[681]

Pradyumna transfers both *Kūtastha Purusa* and *Māyā Śakti* to Aniruddha for further development. They remain with the latter for a thousand years and undergo changes Then there emerges *Śakti* from Aniruddha, *Niyati* from *Śakti*, *Kāla* from *Niyati*, *Sattvatguna* from *Kāla*, *Rajoguna* from *Sattva-guṇa*, and *Tamoguṇa* from *Rajoguṇa*[682] Eight Manus enter into *Śakti* and pass through all the evolutes stated above and in the same order.[683]

677 *AhS* VI 33-4

678 *LT* VII 10, 11a,

679 *AhS* VI 34b

680 *Ibid* VI 37

681 *Ibid* VI 12

682. *Ibid* VI. 13-15.

683 *Ibid* VI. 44b-59.

Māyā Śakti, *Niyati* and *Kāla* are the three aspects of *Śakti* who is Rati, wife of Aniruddha. *Niyati* is the subtle regulator of every thing 684. *Kāla* is the mysterious power existing in time which invites everything to activity.

Guna, which is manifested from *Kāla*, is of the three kinds, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Aniruddha as Visnu controls *Sattva*, Brahmā controls *Rajas* and Rudra controls *Tamas*. Their *Śaktis* are respectively Laksmī, Sarasvatī and Gaurī. These are held to come under the Sheath of Generation (*Prasūtikośa*) 685. After this, the *Gunas* form into a mass called *Avyakta* which is called *Tamas* in one of the texts 686.

Impure creation then starts. It is in two stages, primary and secondary. The former represents the evolution of matter as in the *Sānkhya* system. *Purusas* are not many as in that system but only one who is *Kūtastha* (collective). *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* get modified (lit cooked) by time; that is, time also plays a part here 687. *Mahat* is called by several names such as *Vidyā*, *Go*. *Avanī*, *Brāhmī*, *Vadhū*, *Vrddhi*, *Mati*, *Madhu*, *Akhyāti*, *Īśvarī* and *Prajñā*. It is *Buddhi* with the *Sāttvika* element, *Prāṇa* with the *Rājasa* and *Kāla* with the *Tāmasa* 688. *Dharma*, *Jñāna*, *Virāga* and *Aiśvarya* are the four divisions of the *Sāttvika* aspect: and their opposites, *Adharma*, *Ajñāna* *Avairāgya* and *Anaiśvarya*, represent the four divisions of the *Tāmasa* aspect 689. It is said

684 *Ibid* V 46b

685 *LT*. V 6 Schrader, p 67 *n*

686 *AhS* VI 63a

687 *Ibid* VII 6b

688 *Ibid* VII 9b-10a, *LT* XVI 2b-3a

689 Vide

धर्मो ज्ञानं विरागश्चाप्यैश्वर्यमिति संज्ञया ।
महतः सात्त्विकं रूपं चतुर्धा प्रविभज्यते ॥

AhS. VII 11b-19a.

It is interesting to note that, according to the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*, these four are the qualities of Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha respectively. *SA* xxxvii 2-3

of the Manus that, as they descend through the *Tattvas* into the womb of *Vidyā*, there arises for them *Bodhanā*, an intellectual organ with which they discriminate between the real and the unreal.[690]

Unlike in the classical *Sānkhya*, *Buddhi* represents the *Sāttvika* aspect of *Mahat*[691] Among its several names noted above, *Akhyāti*, *Prajñā* and *Īśvarī* indicate that *Mahat* denotes both vitality and subconscious intelligence.[692] *Mahat* is thus cosmic *Prāna*. Though it is unconscious, yet it is intelligent energy at work. This interpretation is borne out by the use of the word, '*brahman*', in this sense in the *Upanisads*[693] and also the word '*Prāna*' in the place of *Mahat*, while the *Sāṅkhya* categories are enumerated in the *Ahirbudhnyasaṁhitā*.[694] The further stages of creation from *Mahat* are described almost as in the *Sāṅkhya* system.

The descent of Manus is then shown to account for the rise of people from the intercourse of the male and female principles. The Manus thus become the ancestors of numberless men.

The Gross Creation commences with the appearance of the earth, the last *tattva* The principles thus created require coalescence into a mass. This is attempted by Brahmā creating the four youths, Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra who, however, refused to have offspring Rudra who was then created, split himself into eleven Rudras. The six progenitors (*Prajāpatis*), Manu and others, were created, and they attended to the work of further creation,

690. *AhS* VII. 13, 14

691 Cf *Katha U* II, 10-13. *Buddhi* and *Mahat* are kept distinct

692 Schrader, p 73

693. *Ch U* I 11 5

694. *AhS*. xii. 22a.

The individual soul is *citśakti*. It is pure in its essence, imperishable unchangeable, eternal and unlimited It is the consciousness witnessing the functioning of matter It is knowledge and at the same time the knower 995 Like matter, the souls emanate from Śrī 696 They form part of the *Bhūti Śakti* of Lakṣmī.697 They are prepared and pre-determined for bondage or salvation by the Lord's *Nigraha* or *Tirodhāna Śakti*. They should then have their form, power and knowledge obscured, leading respectively to atomic size, powerlessness and ignorance. Then they get affected by all imperfections like nescience, conceit, attachment and so on They indulge accordingly in activities which lead to graver results.698

The souls are classified under two heads, namely, pure and mixed Pradyumna is stated to create the former and Aniruddha the latter through Brahmā, the creator.699 There is justification for this. Those who have a stock of good and bad *karma* to be gone through at the end of a dissolution of the cosmos are required to be introduced into the world by Brahmā who is actuated by the quality of *Rajas*. They cannot make their appearance in the *Kṛtayuga* when *Sattva* dominates. Those who belong to the pure kind must have the *Sattva* predominant and so they are allowed to appear in the world in the *Kṛtayuga* by Pradyumna Himself.700

The *summum bonum* (*hitamatyantam*) for the self is to be freed. The sorrows should end, never to recur, thus giving room for a positive status in the shape of eternal happiness The *Pāñcarātra*

695 *LT* xvi 13-19

596 *Ibid*. vi 36 . xvi. 22a

697 *AhE* VI 8a

698 *Ibid* xiv. 15b-24 These are considered also as the Śakti of Śrī.

699 Cf *Ibid* xxi 12 , *LT*. xii 13, 14, Schrader. p. 82.

700 Schrader, pp. 84-5.

doctrines therefore declare that this consists in the final cessation of the succession of sorrows which implies positive eternal bliss.

Vide:

आत्यन्तिकी निवृत्तिस्तु पुंसो या दुःखसंततेः ।
तयोपलक्षितं नित्यं सुखं यत् तद्धितं स्मृतम् ॥

AhS. XIII 9.

That is, atomic size, powerlessness and ignorance which were forced on the self by the power of obscuration (*tirodhāna-śakti*) get fully removed, leaving the self in its natural condition. Since the atomic size is forced on the self, it is possible to hold that the natural size of the self is not atomic. The evidence regarding the nature of the liberated soul is that it is omniscient and omnipresent. Its omnipresence cannot be explained, if its size is atomic, and so requires explanation The *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā* describes it to be of the size of a mote[701]

Vide:

तत्पदं प्राप्य तत्त्वज्ञा मुच्यन्ते वीतकल्मषाः ।
त्रसरेणुप्रमाणास्ते रश्मिकोटिविभूषिताः ॥

AhS. VI 27.

It is therefore proper to admit, that by 'atomic' is meant 'small' or 'little'. In the state of bondage, the word, '*aṇu*' can be taken to mean spatially restricted, but in the state of release it can mean omnipresence.

The place which the selves occupy after gaining *mokṣa* is one from which they do not return to the mundane world.

Vide:

प्राप्यते परमं धाम यतो नावर्तते पुनः ।

AhS. XXXVII. 26a.

701. *Ibid.* p. 59

This is a non-material place shining with the six qualities The released souls shine there with the lustre of crores of suns and moons. They take no food The Supreme God of gods lies there on the serpent couch, attended by hosts of ever-free selves.[702] This Highest Place will disappear at the time of absolute dissolution and emerge at the time of Pure Creation The released selves will also merge, but will not undergo any suffering.

The nature of the released condition is described as the soul's becoming one with God During dissolution, it becomes latent in Him The Lord declares that the liberated selves become Himself and that there is no difference between them and Himself. This is not *Advaita*, for He adds that the liberated souls sport as He does [703] An inseparable union between the two is meant and is described as like that of the Kaustubha gem and the Lord. In that state, the self is noticed to be clinging to the Lord like a gem.[704] The souls " become practically, but not really one."[705]

Regarding the means of obtaining liberation, it is said in the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* that the liberation of the self depends on the compassion of Śrī which persuades her to bestow her grace on the self. This process is called technically *Śaktipāta*.

Vide :

मया जीवाः समीक्ष्यन्ते श्रिया दुःखविवर्जिताः ।
सोऽनुग्रह इति प्रोक्तः शक्तिपातापराह्वयः ॥

LT. XIII. 8.

702 *LT*. xvii. 9, 15-32.

703 *PāS* I. 4 17.

704 *Viṣṇutilaka*, II. 30, 100

705. Schrader, p. 93.

No one can force God to bring about this. God knows when to give effect to it.[706] To please God for obtaining *S'aktipāta*, four means are recommended. They are *Karma*, *Sānkhya*, *Yoga* and *Sarvatyāga*[707] In another context, the last one is omitted.[708] It is also said that knowledge and religion (*dharma*) are the means, the latter leading to the former. The former may be of a direct or indirect nature, the latter leading to the former. Religion is twofold, being mediate (*vyavadhānavat*) and immediate. The former consists in offering worship to Brahmā and others who represent God, while the latter takes the form of offering direct worship to God. All kinds of worship sanctioned by or based upon the *Vedas* and systems of thought like Pāśupata, *Sāṅkhya* and others come under the former[709] The *Pāñcarātra* mode is of the latter kind.

Vide :

विभूतिमत् परं ब्रह्म तदेवाव्यवधानतः ॥
येन प्रीणयते योगी स साक्षाद्धर्म इष्यते ।
सात्त्वतं शासनं सर्वं तस्यैतस्यावबोधकम् ॥

AhS XIII. 21b, 22

Among these, *Karma* can be treated as of the immediate kind when it is employed to worship the Lord. *Sāṅkhya* refers to *tattvajñāna*. *Yoga* means contemplation on God. *Sarvatyāga* is the path of *prapatti*

The *Karma* mode may be taken to have been treated in the *Caryā* section of the texts. It involves the worship of the Lord in temples and houses The daily life of those who choose this mode is divided under five heads, namely, *Abhigamana*, *Upādāna*,

706 *LT* XIII. 10.

707. *Ibid* XV, 17

708 *Ibid* XVII 49

709. *AhS*. XIII. 10-21a, 23-25.

Ijyā, *Svādhyāya* and *Yoga* Every self is required to offer worship in a temple and also in the house.

After attending to the preparatory routine of bath, *sandhyā* and others, one must approach the *sanctum sanctorum* in the temple or house, uttering prayers and attend to the worship of God This is called '*Abhigamana*' which means literally, 'going towards (God)'. After this, flowers, fruits and other requirements for the worship of God are to be collected. This is known as *Upādana* *Ijyā* is the name given to the ritual of worship After taking food which is called *Anuyāga*, one has to spend the time till the evening in the recitation and study of the sacred texts, listening to the discourses of the teacher or elders, reflection upon what one has learnt from others and offering comments on what one has received from others. This is called *Svādhyāya*. Towards the close of the day, *sandhyā* is to be performed before offering worship to the Lord Deep contemplation on God must then be undertaken with occasional rests that may pass into sleep The name '*Yoga*' is given to this All these together constitute *Pañcakālaprakriyā* 710 and those who follow this are known as *pañcakālikas*.

The *Pañcakālaprakriyā* is the daily routine shaped out of the code of conduct laid down in the *Smṛti* texts to suit the needs for the dedication of life to the adoration of Viṣṇu The *Karma mārga* of the *Bhagavadgītā*, which is based upon the Vedic concept of rituals, is itself a method by which the deeds done are dedicated to God as His. This concept envolves a further adaptation to the exclusive worship of Viṣṇu. Thus, the practical side of the life of a devotee of Viṣṇu is treated in the *Pāñcarātra* tradition as *karma* which is obligatory on all members of society including those who take to the order of ascetics.

710 *JS* *SKS* *Rsi*, I 3-14a, *PārS* IX 161-175, *JS*. XXII, *SprS*. XVII. 68-74, *PāS*. IV 13-3, Cf *AhS* XV. 8a, 49b, *LT*. XVII. 13; XVIII. 51, 52. Both *AhS* and *LT*. mention the word '*Pañcakāla*'.

Jñāna refers to the acquiring of the right knowledge of the *tattva* which is the Ultimate Reality. In particular, what is to be known is related to the fivefold forms of God namely, *Para*, *Vyūha*, *Vibhava*, *Arcā* and *Antaryāmin*. The *vyūha* concept has a significant role to play in this *Jñāna-mārga*, while the *arcā* form receives a direct treatment in the *Karma-mārga*. In fact, the *Kriyā* and *Caryā* sections of the *Pāñcarātra* texts lay emphasis on the *arcā* form, of course, in the background of the *vyūha* concept. The knowledge, which is thus acquired, requires recapitulation on the basis of their common and divergent characteristics.

Vide:

या तत्त्वगणना संख्या तां पुरा शीलयेद्बुधः ।
ततः साधर्म्यवैधर्म्यस्वरूपप्रभवादिकाम् ॥
कुर्याच्चर्चात्मिकां संख्यां शास्त्रतत्त्वोपदेशजाम् ।
चर्चायामिह संख्यायां सिद्धायाममलात्मनि ॥
उदेति या समीचीना संख्या सतत्त्वगोचरा ।
एषा सा परमा संख्या मत्प्रसादसमुद्भवा ॥

LT. XVI. 26-28.

The knowledge which is then acquired is real knowledge This is acquired not by self-effort alone, but also through the grace of God.

The *Yoga* mode is the means which is based on the practices enjoined in the *Yoga* system of Patañjali The process is a highly complex one even for comprehension and difficult to practise. It is purely internal in execution It is of two kinds, namely, *samādhi* and *saṁyama* The former results from the practice of *yoga*. In that condition, the self rests in *Brahman* called Śrinivāsa and remains there undisturbed. The latter consists in the performance of good deeds which are related only to the Highest Self It has physical and mental aspects. It purifies the inner organ and generates pure knowledge.[711]

711 *LT* XVI. 30-41.

Yoga consists in the union effected between the self and *Paramātman* and the process is stated to be of eight parts This is called *Hṛdyāga* which consists in the offering of the self as an oblation (*havis*) purified through separation from matter [712] The eight parts or limbs are enumerated as in the *Yoga* system of Patañjali [713] The ten constituents of *yama* include the four of the *Yogasūtras* and have in addition *dayā*, *dhṛti*, *śauca*, *ksamā*, *ārjava* and *mitāhāra*. *Aparigraha* of the *Yogasūtras* is omitted. *Śauca* mentioned here finds enumerated under *niyama* by Patañjali Some of them here get an original description. For example, *brahmacarya* is not mere continence, but includes not regarding one's wife as an object of enjoyment, a concept developed through the significance attached to women in the *Agamas* [714] Among the kinds of *niyama* enumerated by Patañjali, *santosa* and *tapas* alone are retained. Eight more are added under the names of *siddhāntaśravaṇa*, *dāna*, *mati*, *īśvarapūjana*, *āstikya*, *hrī*, *japa* and *vrata*. The first of these consists in the study of the *Vedānta* *Śraddhā* is faith in the work that is enjoined in the scriptures and *īśvarapūjana* is worshipping Visnu with devotion in accordance with one's capacity. Meditation (*praṇidhāna*) which is recommended as a means of controlling the mental activities in the *Yogasūtras* [715] does got get treated. It does not form part of yogic practice *Āstikya* consists in the conviction that there exists an object which is accessible through the *Vedas* [716] Eleven postures are enumerated along with their descriptions [717]

712 *AhS* XXXI 4b, 5, 15

713. *YS*. II. 29, *AhS* XXXI, 16, 17,, *PāS*. II. 1-8

714 *AhS*. XXXI 18-23

715 *Ibid*. XXXI. 28b.

716 *Ibid* XXXI. 24-30a, *PāS* II. 1 9, 10a.

717. *Ibid*. XXXI. 31b-46, *JS*. XXXIII-17b-23a where four postures are enumerated.

Prāṇāyāma is the next limb which receives a very detailed description Before describing this, the tubular vessels called *nādīs* are required to be purified. They start from the *Mūlādhāra* (perineum) around the navel and pass through twelve *cakras* within the body and reach the *Brahmarandhra*, the cavity in the head The power called *Kuṇḍalinī*, getting its name from its resting in the *Mūlādhāra* like a coiled serpent, covers up the *Brahmarandhra* with its eight mouths, each representing one aspect of *Prakṛti* There are seventytwo thousand *nāḍīs* in the body, of which *susumnā*, *iḍā* and *pingalā* are the most prominent The soul moves about in the *cakras* like a spider in its web. Apart from the five *prāṇas*, there are five more called Nāga, Kūrma, Kṛkara, Devadatta and Dhanañjaya [718] The *nādīs* are to be purified by filling up *iḍā* and *pingalā* by turns with air and expelling it, and this must be done thrice during the performance of the morning, midday and twilight *sandhyā* worship In three months, this process, if practised every day, will cleanse the *nadīs* of all impurities [719] When the impurities are got rid of, *Prāṇāyāma* is to be performed, doing the *japa* of Sudarśana or of *Gāyatrī mantra* all along [720]

Pratyāhāra, the next limb, is the withdrawal of the mind from the objects of the senses and placing it in the Lord [721] Fixing the mind in the Lord is *Dhāraṇā*. *Dhyāna* consists in contemplating upon the Lord with the marvellous form in the midst of the dazzling flame of fire within the *ākāśa* of the heart *Samādhi*, the last stage, brings about the appearance of the Lord [722]

718 *Ibid* xxxii. 7-41

719 *Ibid* xxxii 42-47a

720 *Ibid* xxxii 51-55 , Cf *PāS*, II, 3

721 *Ibid* xxxii 56, 57 Cf *PāS* II 4 8a, 10a.

722, *Ibid.* xxxii. 59, 63, 70b, 71a. Cf. *PāS*. II. 5.

These limbs, when practised, arouse the *Kuṇḍalinī-śakti* and make it ascend, step by step, through the *cakras* and merge in the Absolute Self at the point called *Dvādaśānta*. At this stage, there is the union of Śakti with God.[723]

Nyāsa is enjoined as a means of obtaining final release on the main ground that, with the passage of time, the embodied self is adversely affected so as to lose knowledge, stamina, strength and longevity and is afflicted by the results of the deeds done frequently. So the self is asked to avoid the two extremes of doing good deeds, like the *Agniṣṭoma* sacrifice and bad ones like killing animals, the results of which are bound to affect the doer. The self must seek the Lord as its refuge and it will surely reach Him at the end of its life's journey[724] This is called by several names such as *prapatti*, *prapadana*, *śaraṇāgati*, *bharanyāsa* and so on The Supreme Place, that is, *moksa*, which a self, seeking release, could not get by such means as *jñāna*, *yoga* or *bhakti*, is obtained by this itself[725]

It has six component parts, namely, (i) the resolution on the part of the self to do such acts only as would be in conformity with the divine will, (ii) giving up those acts that would displease God, (iii) a firm conviction that God would protect those who seek His protection, (iv) the choice of God as protector, (v) placing one's own self in His charge and (vi) the realisation of the helplessness of the self to seek any other

723 LT xlix 143-146 Cf. Com. on LT. xx 12, 13.

724 Ibid xvii 51-59a

725 AhS xxxvii 25, 26.

course.[726] Among these, the fifth element must be considered as the act of self-surrender, the others forming its elements, or all the six form may parts of the act. *Nyāsa* is not a physical act, but only a mental process It takes the shape of a prayer in the form, "I am a receptable of sins, I have nothing and have no way to pursue Please become Yourself the means."[727]

Being a form of knowledge, this thought also becomes a means of *moksa*, as enjoined in the Vedic passage,[728]

नान्यः पन्था अयनाय विद्यते ।

By adopting this means of self-surrender, it is said that all that are expected to be performed such as penances, sacrifices and giving of alms and gifts are taken to have been done, and *moksa* is assured It is further held that *nyāsa* is superior to all other methods enjoined for obtaining *mokṣa*.[729]

726 Vide

षोढा हि वेदविदुषो वदन्त्येनं महामुने ॥
आनुकूल्यस्य संकल्पः प्रातिकूल्यस्य वर्जनम् ।
रक्षिष्यतीति विश्वासः गोप्तृत्ववरणं तथा ॥
आत्मनिक्षेपकार्पण्ये षड्विधा शरणागतिः ।
उपाये गृहरक्षित्रोः शब्दः शरणमित्ययम् ॥
वर्तते सांप्रतं चैव उपायार्थैकवाचकः ।
AhS XXXVII. 27b-30a

727 अहमस्म्यपराधानामालयो ऽकिंचनोऽगतिः ॥
त्वमेवोपायभूतो भवेति प्रार्थनामतिः ।
शरणागतिरित्युक्ता सा देवेऽस्मिन् प्रयुज्यताम् ॥
Cf *LT* XVII 59b-60, 61a. *Ibid* 30b-31

728 *TA* III 12 7.

729 *AhS* xxxvii. 34, 35a, 36b, 37a

Nyāsa is given the symbolic representation of sacrifice. The self is the oblation offered with the utterance of the word, '*namaḥ*' One who takes up this means is held to have performed a hundred sacrifices[730] That it is a powerful weapon to be used to fight against worldly sufferings and gain the state of final release is explained by the declaration that even those who are devoted to the performance of good deeds, who are learned and who are adepts in *yogic* methods, do not bear any comparison to one who has taken up *nyāsa*, not being equal to even a billionth fraction of him[731]

Self-surrender does not consist in placing merely one's self under God All the possessions are also to be surrendered to Him.[732] *Nyāsa* is to be done only once The evil consequence of getting rebirth will happen to one who takes to other courses like *karma* or *bhakti*, leaving *nyāsa* imperfectly done.[733] Those who adopt this means must not violate the Vedic law even in thought[734] Any lapse, however, could be expiated by the act itself[735]

Nyāsa is the foremost among the means for crossing the sea of worldly existence It is the only way which both the ignorant and the learned can adopt. Those who adopt this course enjoy the rewards of their good deeds and get freedom from all kinds of bondage and acquire the highest status.[736]

730 *Ibid* xxxvii, 37b-39

731 *LT.* xvii 63.

732. *Ibid.* xvii 80.

733, *Ibid* xvii 89b-90

734 *Ibid.* xvii. 96a.

735. *Ibid.* xvii 102-103a.

736. *Ibid.* xvii. 104b, 105a.

Those who take to the methods of *karma*, *jñāna*, *bhakti* and *yoga* are required to acquire certain specific qualifications which are different according to the distinctions based on birth and sex and mental abilities. Further, there is no certainty that the rewards are sure to be bestowed upon those who adopt them. Some will have to take more births to receive the fruits of these undertakings. Hence these are considered to be hard to practise. From this point of view, *nyāsa* is certainly easier to take up, because there are no restrictions based on grounds of sex, birth, learning and any kind of attainment. However, it is dealared that, though easy, it is hard to practise.

Vide :

उपायः सुकरः सोऽयं दुष्करश्च मतो मम ।

LT XVII. 105b

The significanee of this seems to lie in the fact that *nyāsa* is adopted only once in one's life time, and so the aspirant must become conscious of his getting fully qualified by acquiring all the five constituent parts of *nyāsa* except *ātma-nikṣepa*. In adopting the other methods like *karma* and *jñāna*, the aspirant has to qualify himself by having *upanayana* or listening to the teachings from a preeeptor or practising the *aṅgas* of *yoga*. However, in doing so, he is likely to commit errors which will land him into difficulties such as sinful results, non-removal of ignorance or rise of doubtful cognitions and inability to control mental activities. On the other hand, the result is certain from *nyāsa*, but great care has to be exercised to acquire or realise one's fitness for it. Probably, this is the significance attached to the statement.

In this context, it is interesting to note that *bhakti* is not mentioned as an independent means of *mokṣa*: while the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* which gets a detailed treatment, could be taken to represent *bhakti*, though the word '*bhakti*' is not used as such in this connection. The concept of *bhakti* and the activities of

the *bhakta* get frequent references.[737] In fact, worship of the deity is incompatible with the absence of *bhakti*. To a large extent *bhakti* alone dominates the spirit of the relationship between man and God as evidenced in many a passage in the *Āgama* texts The doctrine of *uyāsa* is not found developed or treated in many well known texts, other than the *Ahirbudhnya*, *Lakṣmītantra*, *Śrīpraśna* and a few other *Samhitās* The general conclusion is to be drawn in favour of the *bhakti-mārga* which is also known as *upāsanā* and comprises the eight-limbed *yoga*, according to other texts.

The dissolution of creation is of seven kinds, namely, *nityā*, the natural and final destruction; *naimittikī*, that relating to the visible universe occurring from time to time; *prākṛtī*, that of all categories which evolve from matter; *prāsūti*, relating to the dissolution of *avyakta* in the *prasūti-kośa*; *māyā*, dissolution of the matter of the *prasūti kośa* in the *māyā-kośa*; *śakti*, dissolution of matter in the *māyā kośa* into the *śakti-kośa*, and *ātyantikī*, escape of the self who performs *yoga* from the *śakti-kośa* into Śakti The self does not get annihilated there, but has independent existence in a transcendental form as part of the Ultimate Reality.[738]

Linguistic occultism plays a part in the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines, forming a strong background for the worship of the deity. *Brahman* is the source of all sound When It feels the urge to create, there arises a state of activity combined with inactivity (*śāntatā*), when the sound and its meaning get distinguished, but yet remaining latent, and objects get indicated by the sounds which denote them Sound should therefore precede the

737 Devotion, which forms the basis for the act of worship, does not get independent and elaborate treatment, but it gets emphasized as essential for a *sādhaka* Vide *LT* ix 51, xxxiii. 115; *Bharadvāja Samhitā*, III 3, *PauS* xxxi.

738. *SKS. Ṛsi.* III. 98-117. See *AhS.* IV. for a detailed description.

rise of the objects or the objects could be held to rise from sound. At this stage, the sound is known as *nāda* which gives rise at the next stage to *bindu* also known as *paśyantī*. This then leads to the *madhyamā* stage when the logical relation between the word and its meaning lies in the form of an impression. *Vaikharī* is the next stage when the syllables and words are distinctly noticeable.[739]

In the evolution of sounds produced, the units of the alphabet are classified variously. For instance, *ūsman*, *antaḥstha*, *svara* and *sparśa* represent the four kinds and so called as *catuṣpadī*. The *mantras* are formed out of these and they flow from *Brahman*. In accordance with the mental realization of the aspirants, particular *mantras* are evolved. That sound which an aspirant receives with the faith that it would protect him, which shields him from fear with its purport concealed, in which the deity's nature is manifested in the sequence in which the syllables occur and which reveals pure knowledge, is called *mantra*.

Vide :

मां त्रायतेऽयमित्येवं योगेन स्वीकृतो ध्वनिः ।
गुप्ताशयः सदायश्च मन्त्रज्ञं त्रायते भयात् ॥
स मन्त्रः संस्मृतोऽहंताविकासः शब्दजैः क्रमैः ।
पूर्णाहन्तासमुद्भूतैः शुद्धबोधान्वयो यतः ॥

LT. XVIII 44-45

Since sound originates from *Brahman*, God is said to present Himself in the form of *mantra*. Particularly, *mantras* are useful in internal worship (*antaryāga*). *Japa* and *dhyāna* do thus become meaningful. When the *mantras* are uttered as in *nyāsa* and *homa*, they convey the intended meaning to the deity, and so it becomes clear that God is there to listen to the prayers of His devotees.

739. Cf. *AhS*. xvi, *LT*. xviii.

Creation of articulate sounds is on the same plan as in cosmic creation The sound '*a*' is at the root, all other sounds being its transformations, each sound being an effect of the sound which precedes it The first sound that is audible is the aspirate and it is called *visarga* or creation; the *anusvāra* represents the withdrawal of speech (*saṁhāra*). The former is called the moon (*soma*) and the latter the sun (*sūrya*). The short vowels are the sun's rays, while the long ones those of the moon. The consonants represent matter and its evolutes [740] The *antaḥsthas* are said to keep God's manifestations in the *vyūhas* within themselves [741] The *ūṣman* sounds and *kṣa* represent the four *vyūhas* and Para Vāsudeva. They form together *Pañcabrahman*.[742]

The structure of sounds is fitted into the inner yogic body of the aspirant This body has twelve *cakras*, each having twelve groups of four sounds each And it represents the microcosmic formation of the macrocosmos This is helpful in *nyāsa* while performing *bhūtaśuddhi* The inner worship becomes purposeful, when the set of four sounds is uttered, since this set has the four *vyūha* deities presiding over it The presence of these deities is easily visualized by the aspirant.

A *mantra* is considered to be complete when it has four parts, namely, *bīja*, *piṇḍa*, *saṁjñā* and *pada* Each is powerful in itself. Among them the *bīja* refers to the soul and the others to the body [743] *Mantras* delight the aspirant in his journey through *padādhvan* [744] They create a sense of complete detachment in him by taking him through *tattvā*, *kalā* and *varṇa*. Finally, the aspirant enters into the eternal *Brahman* called

740. *AhS.* xvi. 76-77, *LT* xix. 20, 22.

741 *Ibid* xvi. 83b-84a

742. *Ibid* xvi 84b-85a, *LT.* xix. 30, Cf. *SKS.* **Indra, II.**

743. *Cf LT* xxi 17-21

744. *Ibid.* xxi. 25.

Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa.[745] Among the several *mantras* that are to be used, those of Sudarśana, Lakṣmī and Narasiṃha are considered to be of supreme importance

A novel process is found evolved and treated in the *Jayatsaṁhitā* regarding the course of *upāsanā*. It is based on the concept of *Viśākhayūpa* It bears comparison with *Madhuvidyā*,[746] according to which *Brahman* is to be meditated upon in the states both of cause and effect *Brahman* is the cause and the sun is the effect. The aspirant must meditate upon *Brahman* in the state of effect, namely, as the sun, and later in the state of cause in the form of the Inner Self (*Antarātman*) of the sun He who does so will become a Vasu in another aeon and, again continuing the meditation as Vasu, he will reach *Brahman* at the end of his life Both the sun and *Brahman* who are to be meditated upon, are only *Brahman* Similarly, an aspirant must meditate upon Aniruddha in Śvetadvīpa, to which place he would go, and then to Pradyumna upon whom he must meditate. Then his meditation on Saṅkarṣaṇa whom he reaches next, will take him to Vāsudeva. This is stated in the *Jayatsaṁhitā* to be another method prescribed for those who desire to enjoy the bliss of *Brahman* This method is prescribed for those who follow the *pañcakāla-prakriyā* [747] The four deities control the

745 *Ibid* xxii

746 *Ch. U.* III 11

747 Vide

श्वेतद्वीपमिदं प्राप्य विश्वरूपधरं हरिम् ।
ततोऽनिरुद्धमासाद्य श्रीमत्क्षीरोदधौ हरिम् ॥
ततः प्रद्युम्नमासाद्य देवं सर्वेश्वरेश्वरम् ।
ततः संकर्षणं दिव्यं भगवन्तं सनातनम् ॥
अयमप्यपरो मार्गः सदा ब्रह्मसुखैषिणाम् ।
परमैकान्तिसिद्धानां पञ्चकालरतात्मनाम् ॥

(Cited in the *Rahasyatrayasāra*, ch xxi, as taken from the *Jayatsamhitā*)

Cf *Mbh Śānti* CCCLIV 14-18a Cf. *PauS* XXX 183-184, XXXI. 209, *Brahmapurāṇa*, II 39, 43-50.

waking, dream, deep sleep and transcendental states which are referred to as *viśva*, *taijasa*, *prājña* and *turīya*[748] The *Laksmītantra* and some other *Āgamas* speak of a fifth stage called *turīyātīta*[749] which is of the form of Laksmīnārāyana. This is the supra-*vyūha* state of existence which manifests the infinite divinity and splendour of the soul

This method of passing from one state to another is called *krama-mukti*, which finds also a different kind of representation. By worshipping the *vibhava* form of God, the aspirant gets to the *vyūha* stage After worshipping Him in that stage, he reaches the subtle form of *Para Brahman* called Vāsudeva[750]

From this, it is evident that an aspirant cannot get *moksa* at the end of the life in which he meditates on a particular form of God As in the case of *bhakti yoga*, one is required to take a series of births Tha stages show that the aspirant will have to start at the waking state and pass on to the dream state by fully getting qualified for it, and so on from one state to the next This is justly brought out by Parāśarabhaṭṭa.

Vide:

जाग्रत्स्वप्नाद्यलसतुरीयप्रायध्यातृक्रमवदुपास्यः ।
स्वस्मिंस्तत्तद्गुणपरिवर्हश्चातुर्व्यूहं वहसि चतुर्धा ॥

Śrīraṅgarājastava, II. 40.

748 *Māndūkya Upanisad*, III 7,

749 *LT* LX 11 12 Cf *JS* VI 13a, *PāS* II. 5 6-7. The preceptor, who initiates the pupil, is said to have attained this state.

Vide *JS* XVI 174b

750 Vide

विभवार्चनाद्व्यूहं प्राप्य व्यूहार्चनात्परं ब्रह्म वासुदेवाख्यं सूक्ष्मं प्राप्यत इति वदन्ति ।

Śrībhāsya, II. 2. 41.

CHAPTER VII

PĀÑCARĀTRA TEXTS

The *Pāñcarātra* doctrines ware preached by five teachers—Śāṇḍilya, Aupagāyana, Mauñjyāyana, Kauśika and Bharadvāja [751] The works of the first and the last, among these, are available, while that of the second gets only reference in some works [752] The other two left no works. The works of the two writers mentioned above, have more than one text with the same name. They treat matters like worship of God, *bhakti* and *prapatti.*

The *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata* throws light on the traditions of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* The *vyūha* doctrine and the daily round of life classified under five heads are the matters treated there The earliest texts must be expected to have dealt with these matters only. On this ground, the texts of the two writers mentioned above could not have been very early The interlocutors, here, are Aniruddha, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Bhagavān, Vāsudeva, Ś I, Bhṛgu, Ahirbudhnya, Nārada, Mārkaṇḍeya, Śāṇḍilya and others. Some of them are said to have received instructions from others mentioned above, and in their turn, they offered expositions to others It is not therefore possible to fix the priority of any of these texts over others.

The number of *Pāñcarātra* texts is listed in some of these works themselves They are 154 in the *Viṣṇutantra*, 108 in the *Pādma* and *Viśvāmitra saṃhitās*, 106 in the *Puruṣottama-saṃhitā*, 103 in the *Bhāradvājasaṃhitā*, 100 in the *Kapiñjalasaṃhitā*, 91 in the *Mārkaṇḍeyasaṃhitā* and 25 in the *Hayaśīrṣasaṃhitā* and

751 *IS* XXI 519-33

752 *PāS*, I 1. 108

Māheśvaratantra and also in the *Agnipurāṇa* Schrader's list contains 210 and 14 more of the texts, but the titles of them are not noted.[753] The Introduction to the *Lakṣmitantra* [754] enumerates 225 works, of which 56 end their names in *tantra*, two in *tilaka*, one in *vaibhava*, one in *rahasya*, one in *sambhava* and the remaining in *samhitā* The *Panorama* of *Pāñcarātra* literature mentions 289 works, of which 45 end their name in *tantra*, three in *sāgara*, one in *vijñāna*, one in *purāṇa*, one in *tilaka*, one in *siddhānta*, one in *udravana* and the remaining 236 in *samhitā* This work describes 104 works among which 99 end their names in *samhitā*, three in *tantra*, one in *samuccaya* and one in *cūḍāmaṇi*.

It is presumed that the remaining 186 works are partially lost. Twelve among them have more than one text with the same name The following groups contain redundant names (1) *Garudasamhitā* *Tārksyasamhita*, *Vainateyasamhitā* and *Khageśasamhitā* , (2) *Narasimhākhyatantra* and *Nṛkesarisamhitā* ; and (3) *Atrisamhitā* and *Ātreyasamhitā* *Aindratantra*, *Kāmatantra* *Dhruvatantra*, *Pāṇinīyamahātantra* *Pāvakasamhitā*, *Puskalasamhitā*, *Bodhāyanatantra* *Mahītantra*, *Māyātantra*, *Varāhapurāṇasamhitā*, *Varāhamihirasamhitā*, *Vaibhavatantra*, *Sakalasamhitā*, *Śākatāyanasamhitā*, *Śaivasamhitā*, *Sammohanatantra* *Sāṅkhyatantra*, *Sūryatantra* *Somatantra* and many others are purely names connected with certain persons and sages who have distinguished themselves in fields associated with them in order to give them a status in the list. Until information is available about many of these works, it is not possible to decide their exact nature. Besides, among these works, 97 are mentioned only once in the twelve lists, 45 twice and 45 thrice.

The *Pāñcarātra* texts are classified under three heads, *divya*, *munibhāsita* and *mānusa*. The *Sāttvata*, *Pauṣkara*, *Jayākhya* and others are treated as *divya*, as they contain the exposition of

753 Schrader pp 6-12.

754 *LT* Introduction, pp 10-13

the doctrines by Nārāyaṇa Himself Those which are the expositions of Brahmā and eminent sages are of the second kind, e g, *Īśvara*, *Pārameśvara* and *Bhāradvāja* and others. The works written by mortals come under the last head. *The Āgamas* are also classified as *sāttvika*, *rājasa* and *tāmasa* The *Īśvara*, *Bhāradvāja*, *Saumantava*, *Pārameśvara*, *Vaihāyasa*, *Citraśikhandi* and some other *saṁhitās* come under the first head To the *rājasa* kind belong the *Sanatkumāra*, *Pādmodbhava*, *Śātātapa*, *Tejodravina*, *Māyavaibhāvika* and others. The *Pañcapraśna*, *Śukapraśna*, *Tattvasāgara* and others are of the *tāmasa* kind

Generally, an *Āgama* text should contain four divisions called *jñāna*, *yoga*, *kriyā* and *caryā* Among the texts of the *Pāñcarātra* the *Pādmasamhitā* contains these divisions Others generally deal with some of these The *Bṛhadbrahmasaṁhitā* has four *pādas* whose exact nature is not stated The *Śāndilyasaṁhitā* has one division called *Bhaktikānda*—first part, and another called fourth part. The *Sanatkumārasaṁhitā* has four divisions named *rātras*, named after *Brahma*, *Śiva* *Indra* and *Ṛṣi* It has lost a division called *Bṛhaspatirātra* Similarly, there are five divisions called *rātra* enumerated as first, second and others in the *Jñānāmṛtasāra* The *Hayaśīrṣasaṁhitā* has four *kāndas* with the names, *Ādi*, *Saṅkarṣana*, *Linga* and *Saura*

Among the texts, the *Pauṣkara* *Jayākhya* and *Sāttvata saṁhitās* are stated to be the best (*ratna*) 755 On them are based the *Pārameśvara*, *Pādma* and *Īśvara saṁhitās* According to the *Pādmasaṁhitā*, there are the five best (*ratna*) texts, *Pādma*, *Sanatkumāra* *Parama*, *Pādmodbhava*, and *Mahendra saṁhitās* 756 The *Kānvasaṁhitā* 757 mentions them to be six in number, with the addition of the *Kānavasaṁhitā* to the list mentioned above. The *Sanatkumārasaṁhitā*, however, is here mentioned as the foremost among the *saṁhitās*.

755 *Is* I 64

756 *PāS* IV 30 203, 33 201-202a

757. Schrader, p. 20.

The *Āgamas* might have originated in North India, but the texts were developed in South India itself These texts contain references to the kings of Cera, Cola and Pāndya regions[758] The *adhyayana utsava*,[759] singing of Godā's compositions,[760] floating festivals[761] and the *āzhvārs*[762] find reference in these texts There are even Tamil expressions used in some of these texts[763] Since these works contain references to Nāthamuni, Yāmuna, Vedāntadeśika and the *āzhvārs*, these must have been composed later than their times[764] The period of the *Āgamas* must be therefore between 800 A D and 1400 A.D However, Utpala (850 A D), Yāmuna (10th century) and Rāmānuja (1017-1137) cite passages from the *Pāñcarātra* texts Therefore, most important *samhitās* like *Pauskara*, *Jayākhya*, *Sāttvata*, *Īśvara*, *Parama*, *Sanatkumāra*, *Ahirbudhnya* and others should have been composed before 800 A D

The *Vaikhānasa* texts have a uniform treatment of the subject matter with slight differences among them. In this, they differ from the *Pāñcarātra* works where there is much difference between one text and another. Some texts deal with theories of cosmogony, leaving aside temple worship, while others concentrate on temple construction and worship of images. Some describe the principles of *yoga* in detail while others devote chapters to the means of expiation The date of

758 *Kapiñjala Samhitā*, 1 14a.
Vide *Pāñcarātra Nūl Vilakkam*, p 4

759 *Aniruddha Samhitā* 26, This also is called *Mārgaśīrṣotsava*.
Vide *Viṣṇurahasyasamhitā* 33, *Viṣṇusiddhānta* 38, *Sprs* 47.
Hiranyagarbhasamhitā, 12

760 *Nārāyanasamhitā*, 45

761 *Ibid* 21, *Sprs* 40

762 *Upendrasamhitā*, 4 5.

763 Vide *Karandikā* (*SKS*, p 64), *ālavattam* (*Ibid*. p 41).

764. *Bṛhadbrahmasamhitā*, *Viṣṇutantra*, *Upendrasamhita*.

composition of a particular text or its priority over another cannot be decided on the strength of its contents For instance, the *Ahirbudhnya*, *Jayākhya* and *Parama samhitās* and the *Lakṣmītantra* give greater importance to cosmological theories, *yantras* and other matters. The *Sanatkumārasamhitā* deals with *mantras*, *mudrās*, installation of idols, expiatory rites and other such subjects, and contains no reference to temple construction or worship of idols The *Pauskara*, *Pārameśvara*, *Sattvata*, *Īśvara*, *Pādma* *Kāpiñjala*, *Viṣvaksena*, *Śrīprasna* and other texts are more concerned with temple worship. It is hard to decide which matter was treated earlier than others, although it will not be wrong to assume that references to temples point to a later date.

The *Pauskarasamhitā* seems to be the earliest and the *Sāttvatasamhita*[765] which refers to it must be placed next to it The *Jayākhya* comes next, followed by the *Ahirbudhyasamhitā* and the *Laksmītantra*, both of which mention the *Sāttvata*[766] The *Īśvara samhitā* must be placed next, though it mentions the *Pauskara*, *Jaya* and *Sāttvata* and also *Pārameśvara*, *Pādma* and *Īśvara* which may be a case of interpolation[767] The *Parama*, *Sanatkumāra*[768] *Pārameśvara*, *Viṣvaksena* and *Pādma* are placed next in this order[769] The criterion lies in that the texts mentioned earlier are cited in the one following them Yet this is not to be taken to help in deciding the priority, as such references to other texts could have been later additions Besides, there are passages in common between some of them, such as (i) the *Sāttvata*. *Īśvara* and *Śrīpraśna* and (ii) the

765. *PauS* in viii. 8, *PārS* in xxii. 50b-51a,

766. *AhS*. v 59 mentions *SS*, xix 64 mentions *JS* *LT* mentions *SS* in II 59 and *JS* in xi 23

767 *JS* I 64 mentions *SS*, *PauS*, *JS* and *PārS*

768 *ParS* in xxxix. 18, *SS*. in xxxix. 18.

769 *PārS* I 19a

Sāttvata, *Jayākhyā* and *Lakṣmītantra*. This order can be admitted only tentatively, for the *Pādmodbhava* and *Kānva saṁhitās* are not available except in fragments The *Mahendra-saṁhitā* is also not available, but passages from it are cited in the *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā*,[770] *Pārameśvara-saṁhitā*[771] and *Pādma-saṁhita*.[772]

The *Pauṣkara-saṁhitā* has a little less than 6000 stanzas in 43 chapters. The text is incomplete, and some chapters break off n the middle. The Lord, with the name, 'Bhagavān', addresses Brahmā as 'Pauṣkara' The text mentions the *Pārameśvara* (which is based on it) and also the *Sāttvata*[773] (perhaps included later in the text) The original text must have been composed in North India Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Sarasvati, Pravāha, Simhavaktrakā, Airāvati, Gajasthitā, Vitastā, Narmadā, Dṛṣadvati, Paroṣnī and Sindhu are the rivers mentioned[774] Yamunā is said to flow in south-east, Sarasvatī in the south and Vitastā in the east Airāvatī is identified with Ravi and Vitastā with Jhelum Drsadvatī joins Sarasvatī Paroṣnī which is Ravi, is identical with Airāvatī and is only repeated here. Except Narmadā, all the above-mentioned rivers flow in north and north-west India The place where this *Saṁhitā* could have been composed should be somewhere in north-west Panjab, perhaps near the Himālayas[775]

In order to delight those who have faith in them and to declare and establish certain places as holy, it is stated that

770 *SKS* pp 139, 262

771 *PārS* X.

772 *PāS* IV 33

773 Vide

आद्यं सर्वागमानां च पारमेश्वरमागमम् ।
प्रमाणपरिशुद्धं च हितमब्जज सात्त्वतम् ॥

774. *PauS* XXXI 106-111.

775. See N. N. Godbole, '*Ṛgvedic* Sarasvati', *BORI* XLII, 1-IV.

Vasudeva and other deities come down and stay within stones, evidently idols which are installed and consecrated.

Vide :

तुष्टये ह्यास्तिकादीनां तु तीर्थादीनां हि सिद्धये ।
क्षेत्रेशा वासुदेवास्ते स्थिताश्चोपलकुक्षिषु ॥

XXXVI 24.

The shrine at Śrīrañgam is glorified and is said to have been consecrated by Vibhīṣaṇa according to the *Pāñcarātra* mode The doors, windows, *prākāras* are all stated to have some deities presiding over them Tondaradippodi Āzhvār and Tirumangai Āzhvār who flourished between 750-850 A D are stated to have built this temple.[776] Since this construction is in strict conformity to the rules laid down here and in the *Pārameśvara-samhitā*, both these texts should have attained the present form long before 700 A.D and the *Pauṣkara* still earlier, as it forms the basis for the *Pārameśvara-samhitā*. Several shrines are also mentioned such as Satyavrata (Kāñci), Vikaṭa (Tirumalai), Siṃhācala and others [777]

God is said to have a *mantradeha* [778] Laksmī and other female deities are the *śaktis* of the Lord [779] Anybody can participate in the ceremony of installation, whether they are experts in the three *Vedas*, or Ksatriyas, Vaiśyas, Sūdras or *Snātakas* who have completed the study of the *Vedas* They should have abiding faith in God and in worshipping God with *mantras*.[780] A woman who is possessed of correct knowledge

776 *Guruparamparāprabhāva* of Pinbazhakiyaperumāl Jiyar, pp.68-69.

777 *PauS* XXXVI 25-28; 347-372, 377.

778 *Ibid*. XXI. 5.

779 *Ibid*. X. 21. XXII. 7.

780. *Ibid*. XXXVIII. 26, 27.

(lit discrimination) is also eligible to participate[781] This *Saṃhitā* deals with the *kriyā* and *caryā* aspects.

The *Sāttvata-samhitā* contains twenty chapters called *paricchedas* and has about 3500 *ślokas* It mentions[782] the *Pauskara*, *Vārāha* and *Prājāpatya samhitās*. This text contains the doctrines taught to the sages by Nārada who passed on to them what Sankarṣana had received from Vāsudeva. The *Viśākhayūpa*,[783] the *Vibhava* deities[784] and their worship receive prominent treatment, which is an indication and justification of the title, '*Sāttvata*', for this *saṃhitā* The four deities of the *vyūha* are said to constitute what is called *cāturātmya*, in which form the deities are to be worshipped Four kinds of *cāturātmya* are mentioned here. The principal deity, who is Vāsudeva, is referred

781 Vide

नारी वा सद्विवेकिनी ।

Ibid I 38

A woman is expected normally to treat her husband as God Consequently there is no need for her to worship any deity *IS* VIII 136 But she is permitted to take the initiation and do worship herself, when she is a destitute, or she has no one to take charge of her Or, she may take her husband's permission for the same

Vide

नारी ह्यनन्यशरणा निस्स्वामिका वा ।

अनुज्ञाता पत्या साथाप्नुयाच्च तत् ॥

Cf *IS* XXII 8, *PāuS* XXX 186b-189

782 *SS*. IX 133

783 *Ibid*. IV

784 *Ibid* V

Vide :

अभेदानादिमूर्तौ वै संस्थितं वटबीजवत् ।

सर्वक्रियाविनिर्मुक्तमुत्तमं परमार्थतः ॥ V. 81

to as Ādimūrti,[785] a name also used in the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* to refer to Viṣṇu from whom emerged four deities, Satya, Puruṣa, Acyuta and Aniruddha The first kind of *cāturātmya* is that which is the seed for all activities and on account of which the world is of the nature of pure consciousness [786] To the second kind belongs the eternal form which is resplendent like the sun and which has the several colours assumed by the four deities This form gives to the worshippers *kaivalya* and destroys the root-cause which brings about bondage [787] The third kind is charming like a stream of nectar, having all the materials necessary for creation, maintenance and dissolution The deities take their form and make their appearance and disappear [788] At the command of the fourth kind of *cāturātmya*, the universe is intact [789] God assumes different colours in the *yugas* [790] He is also said to have a form called *Agnisomīya*, made up of letters [791] The *Pāñcarātra* system is called *Rahasyāmnāya* [792] The members of all the four castes are eligible to get initiated for worship [793] and women who are destitutes or miserable can also take part in it. The husband's permission is required in the case of a woman whose husband is alive[794]

785 *LT* (X) also gives the same description for these kinds, but does not mention the fourth kind See *Ibid* XX. for a subtle kind

AhS (V) refers to it and in XVI offers a treetment resembling the one contained in *LT*. XX Also *Cf* *LT* X

Cf *SA* XXXVII 4a

786, *SS* V 81-82a

787 *Ibid* V 82b-83

788. *Ibid* V 84-85

789. *Ibid*. V 86-87a

790. *Ibid*. V 87b-89.

791. *Ibid* XII 89,

792 *Ibid*. I 16a.

793. *Ibid*. XXII 8

794. *Ibid*. VIII. 136,

The *Jayākhya-saṁhitā* has about 4500 stanzas in 33 chapters called *paṭalas*. This was taught to Nārada by Bhagavān. Śāndilya recounts what he had heard from Nārada. There is an additional section containing 163 stanzas in the first chapter which glorifies the shrine at Kāñci and gives details about the festivals, the situation of the shrine and so on. No doubt, it is informative, but it must have been interpolated, since all the manuscripts of this text do not contain this passage. The *saṁhitā* describes creation of the pure type and traces the emanation of Acyuta from Bhagavān, of Satya from Acyuta and of Puruṣa from Satya These three represent the three manifestations of Vāsudeva and are in the form of consciousness. Puruṣa is also called Ananta and is known as the Supreme Spirit He is the inner ruler (*antaryāmin*) of all. The divine descents emanate from Him Acyuta is of the form of brilliance, Satya has a dazzling body and Puruṣa has radiating lustre All these rest in Vāsudeva, who is of the form of tranquil consciousness.[795] There is difficulty in reconciling these three emanations with the three well-known *vyūhas* of the system, because the latter are identified by distinct colours which however is not the case here.

It is equally difficult to take it as representing the *Vaikhānasa* tradition, for it omits Aniruddha who is admitted as the fifth

795. *JS.* IV 7 Here a reference could be made to the *Garuḍapurāṇa* (XII 14-15) which mention nine *vyūhas*

Vide,

सुदर्शनः श्रीहरिश्च अच्युतश्च त्रिविक्रमः
चतुर्भुजो वासुदेव. षष्ठः प्रद्युम्न एव ।
संकर्षण. पुरुषोऽथ नवव्यूहो दशात्मकः
अनिरुद्धो द्वादशात्मा अत ऊर्ध्वमनन्तकः ॥

Here it appears that the nine *vyūhas* include Vāsudeva (two-handed) who is mentioned Including *Para Brahman* these become ten. Along with Aniruddha aud Ananta, they become twelve

Cf. *Hayaśīrṣasaṁhitā*, XXIV.

deity in it Besides, this tradition takes the order in the reverse way, keeping Purusa at the head. However, the major *saṁhitās* include Satya in the *vyūha* theory and take all the five as forming a unit with five *mantras* [796] Or this account must be taken to have been adopted by the *Vaiṣṇava Āgamas* in general, out of which the *Vaikhānasa* system took them up and added Aniruddha to the list, while the *Pāñcarātra* system developed the *vyūha* theory from the same source. But evidence is wanting to support this position. Anyway, this representation may be taken to give a very early date for this *saṁhitā*

Śāntika, *pauṣṭika*, *vidveṣana*, *māraṇa*, *uccāṭana* and *stambhana* are cruel rites treated here. By the practice of *tāntrika* rites, *khadgasiddhi*, *añjanāsiddhi*, *gulikāsiddhi*, *rasāyanasiddhi*, *yakṣiṇī-siddhi* and other specific results are achieved [797] This gives a sufficiently early date (about 400 A.D), when belief in such achievements prevailed among the Buddhists

Brahman is said to have a transcendental form of bliss, all-pervading and flawless, a subtle form with which It remains within the heart of all beings and a gross form with which creation, protection and destruction are carried out. It is not generally realised by all people. But, while yet remaining formless, It is realised through meditation [798]

The sun is brilliant and the moon is delightful Knowledge which rises as a result of these two, has God for its object. He is of the form of sentience and so is of the nature of Agni and Soma, the form representing the sun [799] Lakṣmī, Kīrti, Jayā and Māyā are His *śaktis* [800]

796. *ViS*. xxii. 142.
797. *JS* xxvi.
798. *Ibid* iv. 28, 24, 102b.
799 *Ibid*. vi. 224-226.
800 *Ibid*. vi 77a.

Brahman is peerless, beyond the reach of expressions and senses and is to be realised by Himself Without any instrument, He is realised and the means for this is the *mantra* And *mantras* are derived from God; they possess shining sounds which increase in strength through the power of the Lord [801] Each *mantra* has subtle, gross and transcendental forms [802]

Brahman's mantra form is of two kinds, partless and possessing parts [803] To realise it, knowledge is essential. This is of two kinds, *sattā* and *kriyā*. The former consists in the knowledge of the existence of *Brahman* as such. *Kriyā* is of two kinds, *niyama* and *yama*, which mean the rules of discipline and austerities respectively Knowledge of the existence of God could be obtained through *yogic* methods which again are to be acquired through worship [804]

This *Samhitā* attaches great importance to *mantras* and their proper use for the equipment of the worshipper. The mode of worship in the temple does not get as much attention as is given in later *samhitās* Cosmology, the *vyūha* theory and achievements through *tāntrika* practices which are treated here and are not traceable to any other *Pāñcarātra* text, may well be taken to suggest a very early date.

The *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā* contains about 3800 stanzas in 60 chapters The text is in the form of an exposition of the doctrines given by Ahirbudhnya, one of the eleven Rudras, to Nārada. Durvāsas who had known this from Nārada, recounts it to Bharadvāja The main purpose of the teaching here is to expound the glory of Sudarśana. The original text is stated

801. *Ibid* vi. 59
802. *Ibid* vi.
803 *Ibid* iv 80
804 *Ibid* iv.

to have contained 240 chapters and was condensed later for easy comprehension.[805]

The text opens with a prayer addressed to Visnu in the form of Sudarśana and another to the Śakti of Visnu The latter is couched in the purely technical terms of the *Tantra* The text treats of various *siddhāntas* with the help of *parakrti* and *purākalpa* [806] There are ten narrations which illustrate the greatness of Sudarśana and the restoration of the *Vedas* to Brahmā by Visnu thus providing justification for the development of the Sudarśana cult [807] A very detailed account is given of twentyone kinds of *Upavedas*, sixty topics of the *Sānkhya* system, two kinds of *yoga*, four kinds of *Karma-saṁhitā*, eight parts of the *Pāśupata* system, and ten topics of the *Pāñcarātra* system. The relative worth of these is also evaluated, and the *Pāñcarātra* system is declared to be the most useful.[808] A sage called Apāntaratapāḥ, sprung from the speech of Visnu, and therefore called Vācyāyana, classified the *Vedas*.[809]

Cosmological accounts, including various kinds of creation and dissolution, are given in four chapters (4-7). A very interesing topic is discussed in this regard Why should there be difference of opinion among thinkers regarding cosmology?

805 *AhS* i 70-73.

806, *Ibid.* i 69b The difference between *parakrti* and *purākalpa* lies in this:

एककर्तृकमुपाख्यानं परकृतिः ।
ऐतिह्यमचरिततया कीर्तनं पुराकल्पः ।

807 *Ibid.* xxiii 41-43, xlv 48-50

808 *Ibid* xi-xiii.

809 *Ibid* xi 57b-59a. cf *Mbh* *Śānti* cccl ix 89a His name is given there as Apāntaratamas, an ancient sage learned in the *Vedas* who became Vyāsa at the command of Viṣṇu. (Śaṁkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, III, 3. 32.)

They are explained as arising on the following grounds Firstly, man's speech is not adequate to bring out the truth. Secondly, people mistake one word for another in certain contexts and do not know what synonyms are Then, limitations of powers of comprehension make it difficult to understand certain things, and one cannot speak about what one could not know. Finally, the aspects of God are infinite, and only one of them is grasped by one philosopher and another by another philosopher and so on.[810]

Brahman is described as characterised by unlimited bliss, having no beginning and no end. It is identical with Nārāyana. It resides in every being, pervades every thing, is faultless and undisturbed like the waveless sea It has no tinge of material qualities and is the abode of non-material qualities. It has no limitations due to space, time and objects, It is ever full, ever manifest (*nityodita*), and cannot be guessed to be of this or that kind or size.[811] The four *vyūha* deities (*Cāturātmya*) are said to be of three kinds in their collective nature on grounds of their pervasion (*vyāpti*), the manifestation of the respective qualities (*guṇonmeṣa*) and personal figures [812]

The self has no beginning, is indeterminable blissful, divine (*bhagavanmaya*), filled, as it were, by the Lord and ever existing under His control It represents an infinitesimal fraction of the Śakti of God [813] It is only those selves that receive God's grace (called *śaktipāta*) that can prosper and get freed from bondage.[814] The self is then rid of the aspects of the effects of its good and bad deeds. Detachment dawns upon it, leading

810. *Ibid.* VIII. 11-14a.

811. *Ibid.* II. 22-26a.

812. *Ibid.* V. 20b.

813. *Ibid.* XIV. 6, 7.

814. *Ibid.* XIV, 28b-30.

to discriminative knowledge. The self now gets interested in knowing some means for its future welfare. It takes to the study of the texts, approaches the preceptor and gets enlightenment through his favour Knowledge of reality, *yogic* practice, performance of good deeds, resorting to observances and such other activities lead the self to the place of Viṣṇu.[815]

This *saṁhitā* is unique and differs much from later texts in its contents. One half of the text is devoted to occultism in theory and practice Philosophy is mainly dealt with in chapters 1 to 14 and incidentally treated in all the remaining chapters; it may be taken to cover one fourth of the work Initiation, social rules, and *yoga* occupy six chapters. The remaining chapters give a very brief account of the installation of images. Even here the practical aspect of the magical figures (*yantras*) dominates, particularly with reference to Sudarśana. Public festivals (*utsavas*) are not at all mentioned The doctrine of self-surrender (*nyāsa*) is treated in ch. 37

These aspects of the contents reveal one significant trait of the early phase of the development of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition Here it is sought to provide a philosophical background for the doctrines as they were taught by God to Nārada The worship of the Lord was then intended to be carried through *mantras* and *yantras*. There is little reference in this text to temples, their construction and worship of idols, all of which should have found a place within the practical side of the *Āgama* only long afterwards at a time when worshippers could not have found it easy to worship the Lord through *mantras* and meditation. The *Pauṣkara*, *Sāttvata* and *Jaya saṁhitās*[816] contain a brief treatment of idol worship. Among these, the second and third are

815. *Ibid.* XIV. 35-40.

816. *JS*, XX

mentioned in this text[817] This need not prove that the reference is an interpolation. On the other hand, the traditional aspects should have been there and the more ancient ones must have received treatment in this text

The constituents of *yogic* practice are given and described in great detail How the tubular ducts called *nāḍīs* in the body are to be purified for doing *prāṇāyāma* receives attention in chapter 32 In order to protect created beings, God created Sudarśana, His own form, from which the magical weapons took their rise. They sprang in five groups. Those which emerged from the mouth, breast, thighs, and feet are called *nivartaka* or *upasaṃhāra astras*, as they are intended to be used in defence. Those which issued out of the other limbs are called *pravartaka astras* and are for offensive warfare The latter appear as though they would devour the worlds, while the former have hands joined in supplication. The latter are sixtytwo and the former fortythree. These weapons have human forms of deadly appearance. But they differ among themselves, having individual marks of identification.[818] Chapter 40 is devoted to the enumeration and description of 102 *astras* together with their powers The *mantras* and weapons which are to be employed to overcome malicious practices carried on by enemies are recounted in chapter 32

Chapters 51 to 59 are devoted to the exposition of the *mantras* of Viṣṇu in the light of their gross, subtle and highest (transcendental) meanings The *Praṇava*, which is also called *Tāra* or *Tāraka-mantra*, is shown to convey through its subtle sense the waking, dream, deep sleep, transcendental, undifferentiated and silent stages presided over respectively by Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva, Śakti and

817 *Ibid* V 59, XIX, 64.

818. *Ibid.* XXX, XXXIV, XXXVI 18-15a.

Viṣṇu. Similarly, the gross and highest senses are shown to convey Sudarśana and Viṣṇu with active and inactive *sakti*. An explanation is also given as to what is meant by the words, '*sthūla*', '*sūkṣma*' and '*para*' It is also shown that the concepts of Godhead taught in the *Purānas* and the *Pāśupata* system, as also expressions like *vyakta avyakta*, *pumān* and *kāla*, convey that the Supreme Reality is *Brahman* in association with Lakṣmī designated as Śakti [819]

All *mantras* of Viṣṇu such as the *aṣṭākṣara*, *sadakṣara* and *dvādaśākṣara* are given similar exposition through their three significations.

The word '*namas*' is stated to convey the sense of surrender [820] After an exposition of the first stanza in the *Jitante stotra* in a similar way the *Nārasimha mantra* is treated likewise and also from the standpoint of yogic practice [821] The same *mantra* is shown to denote the thirtynine descents of God [822] Chapters 57 and 58 expound the sense of the *mantra* of the brilliant Sudarśana and of the five *hotr mantras* [823] The significance of the *Puruṣasūkta*, *Śrīsūkta* and *Vārāha mantra* is treated in chapter 59 The first four *mantras* of the *Puruṣasūkta* are shown to depict the greatness of Vāsudeva, Sankarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha respectively. The *Śrīsūkta* is stated to sing the glory of Śrī and also of Viṣṇu An elaborate exposition of this is stated to have been given elsewhere.

Vide:

हिरण्यवर्णा श्रीसूक्तं कृतोऽन्यत्रास्य विस्तरः । [824]

819. *Ibid* LT 40-42.

820. *Ibid* XXXVII 37b-47a, cf. *Ibid*. LII 2b-3a.

821. *Ibid*. LIV-LVI

822. *Ibid*. LVI

823 *Ibid* LVIII, *T A* III. 1-6.

824. *AhS* LIX. 40a. This is evidently a reference to *LT*. L.

A resume of the contents of the *saṁhitā* completes this chapter. Kashmir appears to have been the place of origin of this *saṁhitā* on the following grounds, stated by Schrader Birch-bark which grows in Kashmir and the Himalayas, is stated to be used as a sheet for the drawing of a diagram (*yantra*) [825] The aspirant who gets initiated according to the tradition, becomes rid of all sins like the sun which gets freed from the obstruction caused to its brilliance by snow, a comparison which points to a region in Kashmir or the Himalayas [826] The reference to King Muktāpīda of Kashmir (c. 750 A D) in Chapter 48 confirms the place of the rise of the text in that region.

Since Utpala (850 A D) cites a passage in his *Spandapradīpikā* which resembles one in the *Ahirbudhnya saṁhitā*, [827] the date of the work can be fixed before 850 A D , perhaps in the eighth century The Kashmir origin of the work and Utpala being a native of Kashmir strengthen the identification of the passage cited by him

The *Laksmī tantra* contains 4000 stanzas in 57 chapters, of which the last seven are not included in all the manuscripts on which the printed text is based. The work is in the form of a discourse given by Śrī to Indra. Nārada gives a version of this to the sages assembled in the Malaya hills The colophon at the end of every chapter refers to the text as *Pāñcarātrasāra*, perhaps as a summary of a larger original which however is said to have contained 100 crores of stanzas [828]

Though the text is not divided into sections which are expected of an *Āgama* work, it is found that philosophy as forming part of *jñāna* is dealt with in about a third part,

825 Schrader, pp 96-97; *AhS*. XXVI. 75.

826 *AhS*. XXXIX 28.

827. Schrader, p. 18.

828 *LT* XLIV 52.

consisting of the first seventeen chapters. The science of occultism takes up nearly twenty chapters *Yoga* has a brief treament. Chapters 37, 41 and 53 deal with *kriyā*. It is found thus that philosophy and occultism (*caryā*) have received predominant attention in this text.

One noteworthy feature of this work is that the female principle, *śakti*, is demonstrated to be responsible for all that takes place as creation, maintenance and destruction, keeping Viṣṇu in the background. Yet it is sought to be proved that only at the will of Visnu, Śrī becomes active He is perfectly tranquil, changeless and eternal, and thus He is in the background. As a philosophical principle, Śrī occupies a status equal to that of Viṣṇu. She is thus an integral part of Viṣṇu

Creation is detailed in three ways. The first method is split into three classes, namely, pure, mixed and impure The pure type is a transcendental one which includes the *vyūha* emanations The second type is mixed: it refers to the creation made by Brahmā; and the impure kind follows the Sāṅkhya theory of evolution[329] The second method is based on the principle of stages called *kośas*[830] The third method is based on the emanation of sound from *Brahman* and is divided into six stages called *adhvan*[831] This method has a very important role to play in this *Āgama* It seeks to relate the power of *mantras* with the worship of the deity

The contribution made by this *saṁhitā* to cosmology is indeed high, for in no other *Pāñcarātra* text creation receives such systematic treatment The principles underlying the concepts of six *kośas* and six *adhvans* are essential to explain two

829 *Ibid.* III, IV

830 *Ibid.* VI

831. *Ibid.* XXII,

facts. Matter and selves are eternal. Where do they rest prior to creation? They have to be in some place undisturbed during the period of deluge. The *Āgama* tradition admits the principle of *kośa* to explain the emergence of matter and self, *kośa* itself marking the stage which represents the projection of *śakti*. The concept of creation of sound becomes meaningful through its rise from *Brahman*. Being an emanation from a subtle stage, the gross sound can easily indicate its source. God is often depicted as having *mantra* as His body. The worship of God through the utterance of *mantras*, which are made up of sounds in specific collocations, becomes therefore understandable. When sounds are uttered, they find a reflex and reciprocity in God.

The *Pāñcarātra* system deserves credit for the way in which it makes all the three methods of creation supplement one another. The bearing of each on the others explains how the *vyūha* deities and idols which belong to pure creation, could be worshipped by the selves who emerge from the *kośa* and use the *mantras* which represent sonic creation. Some of the *saṁhitās* have references to the *kośa* and *adhvan* creations in the development of the doctrines, of course mention being made of the various stages only as and when the occasion demands them.[832]

The Supreme Being is a unity in duality. He is ever with Śakti. He is called by several names such as Paramātman, Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa and others. He is not differentiated from Śakti and so is said to be non-dual (*advaita*).[833] He is called Śrīnivāsa, while appearing in the meditation of the self without any disturbance.[834]

Vide :

यमाद्यङ्गसमुद्भूता समाधिः संस्थितिः परे ।
ब्रह्मणि श्रीनिवासाख्ये ह्युत्थानपरिवर्जिता ॥

LT. XVI. 31.

832. *ParS*. x, *SS*. xix, xxiv; *IS*. iii, 16, *PauS*. xxx; *PāS*. iv. 7.

833. *LT* ii. 5-11.

834. Cf *PauS* xxxi. 39.

He is also called Lakṣmī-nārāyana.[835] This shows that He is ever associated with Lakṣmī. The *vyūha* and *vibhava* forms are all described. The number of divine descents is given here as thirtyeight.[836] And this becomes thirtynine when *Viśākhayūpa* is included among them It is also thirtynine in the *Ahirbudhnyasaṁhitā*, in which *Viśākhayūpa* is not mentioned, but Padmanābha must be included[837] The form of God as idol is simply referred to as having a non-material body, that is, having a body made up of six *guṇas*.

Vide :

अर्चापि लौकिकी या सा भगवद्भावितात्मनाम् ॥
मन्त्रमन्त्रेश्वरन्यासात्सापि षाड्गुण्यविग्रहा ।

LT. II. 59b-60a

It is curious to note that both the *Ahirbudhnyasaṁhitā* and *Lakshmitantra* do not mention the form as the inner ruler (*antaryāmin*) and there is no reference even to *arcā* in the former. However, these two can be taken to have been referred to in two passages from the former[838] It is not, however, clear why no definite mention is made of them.

The self is only Śakti, that is, the *jīvakośa* of Śakti. It is pure and independent. It is consciousness contracted and appearing like a mountain reflected in a mirror. It is afflicted by the five kinds of misery, *tamas*, *moha*, *mahāmoha* *andhatāmisra* and *avidyā*.[839] It has five duties to perform.[840] Its contact with external objects gives rise to the cognitions about them.

835 *Ibid.* I. 1, ii. 16,

836. *Ibid.* xi. 19-25 ; xliv. 52

837. *AhS.* v. 50-56 ; Schrader, pp. 44-47.

838. *AhS.* i. 1 ; xi. 63b.

839. *LT.* xii. 8, 9.

840. *Ibid.* xiii. 27-29.

This is called *sṛṣṭi*. Its attachment to those objects is *sthiti*. Attachment to a particular object is discarded by the self when it takes to another, and this is called *saṃhāra*. *Tirobhāva* is the formation of impressions created by that object and *anugraha* is the removal of that impression. These are the five functions of the self which is part of Śakti and correspond to the five functions of Śakti with the same names Through the grace (*śāktipāta*) 841 of Śakti, the self discards its limitations and becomes omniscient and omnipotent The waking, dream and deep sleep states really belong to matter. The transcendental state does not really belong to the self, because it consists of pure non-material *sattva* 842

The self is required to get freedom from bondage, to pursue the path of *karma* which would please Śakti which grants enlightenment. Knowledge of Reality is then acquired by following the path of *jñāna*. By pursuing the path of *yoga* as the next step, the self gets freed from all limitations and it becomes one with Lakṣmī-nārāyaṇa 843 *Nyāsa* is recommended as an alternative and easier means of getting *mokṣa*.844

Like the *Ahirbudhnyasaṁhitā*, this text also is free from reference to idols and idol-worship in temples. The theories of creation get a detailed treatment. Śakti's greatness is stressed in every part of the work. The descents of Lakṣmī and Her emanations are covered in three full chapters, 4, 8 and 9.

Linguistic occultism is treated in several chapters. Sound is traced to its source, *Brahman*, through the stages of *nāda*, *bindu* and others. Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and

841. *Ibid.* XIII 8, 10, 11a,

842. *Ibid.* XIII. 31-39.

843. *Ibid.* XIV. 58, XV.

844. *Ibid.* XVII.

Aniruddha are the deities for these stages.[845] The sound units called *mātṛkā* are classified and shown to be presided over by the *vyūha* deities [846] The structure of the *mantra* [847] is analysed and explained as constituted of *bīja*, *piṇḍa*. *saṁjñā* and *pada*. Sonic creation through the six stages called *adhvan* and the classification of *mantras* into high, middle and low are dealt with in chapter 22 In a way, this chapter describes the *mantra* form of Lakṣmī. *Tārakā*, *Tārikā*, *Anutāṁkā*, *Jagadyoni*, *Pradyumna*, *Sārasvata* and *Mahālakṣmī* are the seven *bīja mantras* [848] which are offered an exposition in chapters 24, 25 and 26. Śakti with its Agniṣoma, Sūrya and Sudarśana aspects is set forth in describing *Kriyāśakti* in chapters 29 and 30 This text, which is devoted to the glorification of Lakṣmī, attaches great importance to *Tārikā* which therefore gets elaborate treatment under gross, subtle, the highest and other standpoints.[849] *Tārikā* should be acquired through initiation and this is treated along with the way of worshipping it in chapters 42, 43 and 44. The way of successfully worshipping the *mantras* of Lakṣmī, and the manifestations, Kīrti and Jayā, are treated in chapters 46, 47 and 48 Each hymn in the *Śrīsūkta* gets elaborate exposition in chapter 50. It is perhaps this exposition which is mentioned in the *Ahirbudhnya saṁhitā*[850] What seems to be intended there is that the exposition of the *Śrīsūkta* is to be given, as of the *Puruṣasūkta* There is no *saṁhitā* or any text which is available where the *Śrīsūkta* gets an exposition. In the absence of information to the contrary, it is the exposition in the *Lakshmitantra* that should have been

845 *Ibid* XVIII

846 *Ibid*. XX.

847. *Ibid*. XXI

848 *Ibid*. XXIII 36-38.

849. *Ibid*. XXXII, XXXIII.

850. *AhS*. LIX. 40a.

meant. In that case, priority of this text to the *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā* will have to be admitted.

Some indications are there to suggest Kashmir as the home of this *Tantra* also. One is the recommendation that birch bark be used for inscribing the *mantra* of Lakṣmī [851] *Nyāsa*,[852] the doctrine of self-surrender, is treated as in the *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā*. These two are the only two ancient texts which deal with this doctrine. Grant of divine grace is referred to as *Śaktipāta* in both.[853] This expression occurs also in the *Śaiva Āgamas*[854] of Kashmir. It must be admitted that *Vaiṣṇavism* flourished in Kashmir along with *Śaivism*. The *Āgamas* of both these could have had a common source and also influenced each other. In these circumstances, both these texts could have had their origin in Kashmir.

The *Pauṣkara-saṁhitā*, too, which refers to some geographical surroundings through mentioning rivers, can have risen in Kashmir. Likewise, the *Jayākhya* which refers to many cruel practices could have also taken its rise in Kashmir. So, it might not be wrong to assume that all these early *saṁhitās* of the *Pāñcarātra* could have had Kashmir as their home.

The *Lakṣmī tantra* mentions the *Sāttvata-saṁhitā* twice [855] If the reference in the *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā* of the 8th century to the exposition of the *Śrīsūkta* can be taken to mean this text, then this must be placed before that date.

851. *Ibid.* XLVI. 38. Cf. *AhS.* XXVI. 78.

852. *Ibid.* XVII, cf. *AhS.* XXXVII.

853. *Ibid* XIII 8, *AhS.* XIV. 33, 38

854. *Rasārṇava* 3, cited in the *Bhāskarī*, Vol. III, Introduction p. CXCII.

855. *LT* II. 59. XI. 28.

The *Iśvara-samhitā* contains about 8400 stanzas in 25 chapters. It is said to be based on the *Sāttvata-saṁhitā* Both of these are stated to be followed at Yādavādri, known also as Melkote in the Karnataka Pradesh. Nārada is the narrator of the *Sāttvata* system in this work Śāṇḍilya, Aupagāyana, Mauñjyāyana, Kauśika and Bharadvāja performed penance on the Totādri Hill. They were taught the system by the Lord Himself who said to them:

एष एकायनो वेद उपदिष्टो मया द्विजाः ।
मोक्षायनाय वै पन्थाः एतदन्यो न विद्यते ॥

IS XXI 534

A reference[856] is made to the origin of this system in the *Kṛta Yuga* and its frequent disappearance and recreation The seven sages called *Citraśikhaṇḍins*, Sanatsujāta, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumāra, Kapila, Sanātana, Brahmā, Rudra and Indra are stated to have promulgated this system Prahlāda, Sugrīva, Hanumān, Vibhīṣaṇa, Sanaka and others adopted the routine of *pañcakāla*[857] The *Pauṣkara* and the *Pārameśvara-saṁhitās* are mentioned[858]

The *Pāñcarātra* system is said to offer an exposition of the ever manifest (*nityodita*) stage of God, *vyūha* and installations which may refer to those of the idols in temples The *Pāñcarātra Āgamas* are not of human origin and must be treated as the *Upaniṣads* of *Brahman*[859] While enjoining the worship of the *vyūha* deities, Puruṣ , Satya, Acyuta and Ananta are mentioned as forming the *vyūha*[860] This is in a way after the manner of

856 *IS.* XXI 538-549
857. *Ibid.* I 29-31, VIII 177.
858. *Ibid.* I 64-b.
859. *Is.* XXI 561-566.
860. Vide.

अथवा पुरुषस्सत्यो ह्यच्युतोऽनन्त एव च ।
चतुर्दिक्षु क्रमेणैव पूज्य यद्वाक्रमेण तु ॥

the *Jayākhya*, but the order is that of the *Vaikhānasa*. Ananta is another name for Puruṣa in the *Jayākhyā*, while it denotes a different entity here Or, the passage may be taken to mean that the *vyūha*-of Vāsudeva and others may be worshipped or the four deities mentioned above may be installed, one in each direction, and worshipped. In the latter case, the *Vaikhānasa* method is followed here, except for putting Ananta in the place of Aniruddha.[861]

Cosmological and philosophical treatment of the doctrines do not find a place here, but the *tāntrika mantras* are enjoined for use The *Aṣṭākṣara*, *Ṣoḍakṣara* and *Dvādaśākṣara* are mentioned as the important *mantras* [862]

This *saṁhitā* discusses many matters like idol worship in temples, the installation of the idols and conducting festivals. Śrīrangam, Yādavādri and Kāñci are stated to be important places[863] where the *Pāñcarātra* mode of worship is adopted. There is a separate chapter describing the glory of Yādavādri. Sanatkumāra is said to have brought Nārāyaṇa to this hill which therefore came to be called as Nārāyanādri and worshipped Him according to the *Sāttvata* mode. Rāma is said to have worshipped Him at Ayodhyā and hence He is known as Rāmapriya. It is said that Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa brought Rāmapriya to Yādavādri and celebrated the festivals after installing Him there [864]

Yāmuna (916-1041) cites passages from this work, but they are not available in the present text. Anyway, this text must have been composed long before 900 A D, when it must have been admitted as a standard work on the system.

861. *SA* xxxvii 12,13

862. *IS* vii. 17, 114, xxiii 52, 53

163 *Ibid* i 67.

864. *Ibid*. xx.

The *Parama-saṁhitā* has a little more than 1000 stanzas in 31 chapters. What the Lord (named here as 'Parama') expounded in answer to the questions raised by Brahmā is narrated by Mārkaṇḍeya to Devala. The installation of idols and the method of worshipping them receive treatment, but there is no reference to the construction of temples and aspects of worship there On the other hand, cosmology, *yogic* practices and such other matters are treated briefly.

Three methods[865] are described for worshipping God. Worship through *mantras* is stated to be *karmayajña*, *japa* of the *mantras* and *stotras* constitute *vākya-yajña* and mental worship of God is *manoyajna* Nothing is said to be more beneficial than offering worship at the feet of Hari.

Vide :

हरिपादार्चनादन्यत्र किंचित् परमं हितम् ॥
III. 31b.

Among the *mantras*, those of Varāha, Narasiṁha, Śrī and Sudarśana are declared to be the best[866] Chapters 23, 24 and 25 break off with lacunae The date of this work could be placed before 900 A D, as it is cited by Yāmuna of the 10th century in his *Āgamaprāmānya*. Perhaps, a still earlier date is suggested from the absence of reference to temples

The *Sanatkumārasaṁhitā* contains 3549 *ślokas* in 37 chapters The work is divided into five sections each called '*rātra*' The first four are called *Brahmarātra*, *Śivarātra*, *Indrarātra* and *Ṛṣirātra*. The last section, *Bṛhaspatirātra*, is not extant, and the first three chapters in the *Brahmarātra* are also missing. From the colophons, the name of the text is also known as

865. ParS. iii. 25a-27a.

866, *Ibid*, xvi. 2.

Mahāsaṁhitā[867] and *Vaiṣṇavasiddhānta*[868] At the end of the last section,[869] the text is referred to as '*daśasāhasrikā*', which means that it consisted of 10,000 stanzas. It is difficult to believe in this, for even if the lost *Bṛhaspatirātra* was longer than any other section, the total number would not come up to so much. Or, it must be supposed that several stanzas were lost even in some of the chapters available in print.

There is another text with this name whose chapter called *Akṣiroganirmūlanam*,[870] which forms also the 94th chapter of the *Śāntitantra* of the text, *Pāñcarātra-mahopaniṣad*, is alone available That the *Pañcarātra* system dealt with matters like the treatment of diseases is evident from a reference in the present *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā*[871] and in the *Kāśyapa-saṁhitā*.[872] It is held by some scholars that there is another work with the name, *Mahāsanatkumāra-saṁhitā*[873] But there is no need to admit this, for some of the passages cited by these scholars as taken from this latter text are traceable to the printed *Sanatkumāra saṁhitā* Other passages could have formed part of the lost *Bṛhaspatirātra* The *Śāntitantra*, too, could have been included in this. but the name, '*tantra*', goes against this assumption unless it be the name of a topic in one of the chapters of this *rātra*

The *Āgamaprāmāṇya*[874] and the works of Vedāntadeśika cite some passages as taken from the *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā* on

867 *SKS* pp. 96, 220

868 *Ibid* p 418

869 *Ibid* p. 418

870 *D.* 13012.

871. *SKS Śiva*. ch. 38, 211,

872. Madras 1933. edition.

873. Schrader, p. 24 ; also refer to *Brahmavidyā*, Vol. 34, parts 3-4, p. 232 *fn.* 3 and *Pāñcarātra Nūl Viḷakkam*, p. 86.

874. *Āgamaprāmāṇya*, pp. 74, 75.

matters pertaining to daily practices, *prapatti* and others. While a few of these could be traced to the printed text, the remaining are lost and should have formed part of some of the sections available. It is not possible to suggest that all these could have formed part of the lost *Bṛhaspatirātra*.

The *Sanatkumāra-saṁhita* is in the form of discourses given by Sanatkumara on what he learns from Brahmā, Śiva, Indra, sages and Bṛhaspati respectively in the sections called after the names of these persons. The names of the sages are not given. In the versions of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition contained in the *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata* and recorded also in the *Īśvara-saṁhitā*, these persons were said to be the promulgators of the doctrines.

Sadāviṣṇu is the Supreme Deity who is partless and is also called Nārāyaṇa. He is formless.

Vide :

ततः परतरं देवं सदाविष्णुं समाश्रयेत् ।
स एव निष्कलो देवः स च नारायणः प्रभुः ॥

Ṛṣirātra, III. 93.

He is called Viṣṇu when ritualistic worship is not offered, and when it is offered, He is called Mahāviṣṇu. Both are to be worshipped.[876] This kind of classification of the deity in the *Pāñcarātra* tradition is known also in the *Vaikhānasa* system.[877]

This aspect of the Deity is made clear through the treatment of *vyūha*. The Supreme Deity in the unmanifested stage is

875. *SKS*. is referred to in *SR*. pp. 57, 80 and in *RTS*. II. pp. 53, 93, 142, 376.

876. *SKS*. *Brahma*, VI. 141.

877. *VK*, p. 493.

called Sadāviṣṇu who is also known as Vāsudeva from whom arises a Vāsudeva with a definite form and called Mahāviṣṇu who becomes the creator and protector of all. He created from His mind a goddess, Śānti, from whom was produced the destroyer, Sankarsana also called Śaṅkara. Pradyumna, also called Branmā, arose from the left side of Saṅkarṣaṇa. From Pradyumna arose Sarasvatī, out of whom emerged Aniruddha also called Purusottama. Rati issued out of Aniruddha, who created the waters where He reposed. From his navel, there arose a lotus. From the egg which appeared from that lotus, there came out Hiranyagarbha identical with the four-faced Brahmā. A goddess, Saṅdhyā, arose from Brahmā. Rudra, also called Satya, came out of Sandhyā. Marīci, Dakṣa and other progenitors were also born of her. Acyuta, identical with Pradyumna, emerged from Satya. Aniruddha sprang out of Acyuta. Thus there are two sets of *vyūhas*, one subtle and the other gross. Those deities belonging to the gross kind attend to the work of creation.[878] This treatment differs from that given in the *Lakṣmītantra*.[879]

The account of the divine descents is also peculiar and does not have much in common with that in the *Purāṇas*. The gods, who were harassed by Hiraṇyakaśipu, approached Aniruddha lying in the ocean on the serpent-couch. Viṣṇu is not stated to have made His appearance from a pillar, though His slaying that demon is mentioned.[880] The gods desired to avoid old age and so approached Saṁkarṣaṇa who took the form of the tortoise and gave them nectar.[881] At the command of Viṣṇu, Visvaksena became Garuda, the vehicle of the Lord.[882]

878. *SKS. Indra*, VI.

879. LT. IV.

880. *SKS. Indra*, III. 14 ; *VP*. I. 20 does not mention the slaying of the demon.

881. *Ibid. Indra*, III. 36.

882. *Ibid. Ibid.* IV. 39-69.

Hayagrīva,[883] the mind-born son of Pradyumna, restored the *Vedas* to the gods who had lost them. When they had lost all knowledge, they were taught the Sāmkhya doctrines by Kapila who was created by Samkarsana [884] Samkarṣana came down as the son of Jamadagni [885] Krsna taught the *Pāñcarātra* system [886] This version of divine descents shows how the *vyūha* deities contributed to the maintenance of *dharma*

As in the *Ahirbudhnya-samhitā* and *Lakṣmī-tantra*, here too, there is no mention of the form of God as *antaryāmin* But the *ṣāḍguṇya* aspect is not dealt with here and thereby it differs from the other two ancient *saṃhitās* mentioned.

Curiously enough, this text refers to four kinds of *linga*, Brāhma, Sāṃkara, Vaisnava and Tridaiva. Installation of these is mentioned. It is not clear whether the *liṅga* of the Vaisnava kind was prescribed at a time before idol worship came to be adopted [887]

The *mantras* are classified as *Saumya*, *Āgneya* and *Saumyāgneya* and also as *Vaidika*, *Tāntrika* and *Vaidika-tāntrika*.[888] The *Tāntrika-mantras* have an important role in the *Pāñcarātra* system Among the *mantras*, the *Aṣṭākṣara*, *Dvādaśākṣara* and *Visnugāyatrī* are important [889] A liberal outlook is evinced in prescribing the *mantras* for other deities such as Devī, Ṣaṇmukha, Agni, Yama, Rudra and others [890]

883 *Ibid Ibid* IV 59b-61.

884 *Ibid Ibid* IV 63-66a, cf, *Bh.* III 24.

885 *Ibid Ibid* IV 67

886 The followers of the *Pāñcarātra* are known by different names like Sāttvata, Bhāgavata, Vaiṣnava and Pāñcarātrika. All these are said to have undergone initiation. *Ibid* III; II. 80-82.

887. *SKS Brahma*, VI. 50-52a.

888. *Ibid Śiva*, II 1, *Ṛsī*, V, 37-40a.

889 *Ibid Śiva*, III. 2.

890. *Ibid. Ibid.* I.

Karma, *jñāna* and *yoga* are enjoined as the paths to be taken up one after another in this order for obtaining salvation. Worship of the idol is recommended while pursuing the first two ways. While practising *yoga*, the aspirant will have spiritual experiences in dreams, in his own body, in the inner effulgent self, in his mind and sense-organs [891] He realises close union (*sāyujya*) with Visnu [892] while practising *yoga*.

To adopt any of these paths, it is necessary to worship God. By worshipping Mahāviṣṇu, through *yoga*, one becomes fit to adopt *karmayoga*. Sadāviṣṇu becomes pleased with this *karma* and makes the aspirant fit to adopt *jñānayoga* Thereupon *yogic* practice brings about the final release of the aspirant. The proper place, time and kind of penance one is required to undertake are also described [893]

Those who worship Visnu with the three *mantras* get, after death, a form like that of Visnu and are also called Viṣṇu. Such persons are given various regions to occupy where they get different names which are enumerated in *Indrarātra*, chapter 6. Some of these are identical with those found in the *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma* The regions which they occupy are described in the next chapter Curiously enough, there is no reference here to Vaikuntha. Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha are mentioned as worshipping Sadāviṣṇu [894]

Letters which make up the *mantras* [895] are enumerated together with their presiding deities. The basic letters and their evolutes are treated in such a way as to throw light on the linguistic aspect [896] of the *mantras*. Perhaps, a study of them

891. *Ibid Ṛṣi*, III. 98-117,
892. *Ibid. Ibid*, III, 97.
893. *Ibid*, III 98-117, 54-55, 56a.
894. *Ibid. Indra*, VII. 112-113.
895. *Ibid. Śiva*, II.
896. *Ibid. ibid*, *Indra*, II.

in the light of modern linguistics might unravel some mysteries about the nature of sound and letters.

The *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā* uses Tamil expressions like *ālavattam*[897] and *karaṇḍikā*[898] (which mean fan and ladle respectively) indicating that these were added while the text was revised for use in Tamil Nadu. Offering of flesh to the deities is referred to suggesting that at least the portions where such references are found were composed either before the full development of Jainism and Buddhism or at a place where their influence was not felt[899] Archaic expressions are also used quite frequently[900] Mention is often made of opinions on certain matters which could not be traced to any known source, but which point to the work presupposing some ancient *Pāñcarātra* texts[901]

This *samhitā* refers to *Pādmodhbhava*,[902] a work available only in fragments: *Padmodbhava Purāṇa*,[903] *Mahendra-samhitā*,[904] *Nāradārcanikā*,[905] *Garuḍārcanikā*,[906] other *arcanikās*[907] and

897 *Ibid* p 411

898 *Ibid* p, 64.

899 *Ibid.* pp 106, 121, 123.

900 For example, *samārabhet*, *Ibid* p 67, *vinyaset*, *Ibid* p 103; and *gāyatriyā*, *Ibid*

901. *Ibid* pp 70, 71, 74, 75, 167, 245, 247 There is an interesting representation of the four *vyūhas* in four different ways:

1 Nara, Nārāyaṇa, Hari and Kṛsna (cf *Mbh. Śānti* CCCXLII. 18).
2, Indra, Yama, Varuna and Soma
3 Vāsudeva, Sankarsaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha; and
4 Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha. *Ibid. Brahma*, VIII. 40-42.

902 *Ibid*, pp. 141, 143, 164, 308.

903 *Ibid* pp 181, 187.

904. *Ibid* pp 139, 262.

905 This is a part of *Pādmodbhava.*

906. *Ibid*

907. *SKS*, p. 181.

Śatasāhasrikā.[908] Since this text is treated as one of the five best works (*ratna*) and is stated to be the foremost among the *saṁhitās*,[909] it is possible to have an idea of its importance among the *Pāñcarātra* works. That it is stated to be the foremost (*ādya*) in the *Kapiñjala* does not point out to its priority over others in point of time, but only to its importance. The unique concept of the Supreme Reality, the development of the *vyūha* theory, the role assigned to the *mantras*, the practical side of *tantra* which includes the use of *mudrā*, *maṇḍala* and *nyāsa* and the treatment of the routine life of the followers of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition in the *Brahmarātra* give an individual stamp to this text, a feature not to be noticed in any other *samhitā*. The lost portions in the *Brahmarātra*[910] and the whole of the *Bṛhaspati-rātra* must have contained important details on the doctrines and practices of the *Pāñcarātra* system. These topics and the fact that temples and festivals are not mentioned should have been responsible for calling this work *ādya*, not ancient, but to be reckoned as first in the enumeration of *samhitās*.

It is worth noting in this context that this text is twelfth in the order enumerated in the *Padma-saṁhitā*.[911] Mention of the *Padmodbhava* and *Māhendra*, which are cited in the *Sanatkumāra-samhitā*, need not be given serious consideration in regard to priority. Anyway, the reference made to this text in the *Kapiñjala-samhitā* stands unaffected.

The *Pārameśvara-saṁhitā* has about 9000 stanzas distributed among 26 chapters. It seems to have had two sections, *jñānakāṇḍa* and *kriyākaṇḍa*. The first section is lost, except for

908. *Ibid*, p. 309

909. *PāS*. IV. 39, 203. *KapiñjalaS*. I. 14a.

910. *SKS Indra*, IV. 13. The *Dīkṣādhyāya* is lost.

911. *PāS* I. 1. 100b.

one chapter. Every aspect of the *Sāttvata* system is said to have been treated here. This chapter which is now available contains an account of the development of the *Pāñcarātra* system[912] through several stages, much in the same way as in the *Nārāyanīya* section of the *Mahābhārata*. The promulgators of the doctrines are named as in the *Īśvara samhitā* Śāndilya is stated to have taught the doctrines to Sumantu, Jaimini, Bhṛgu, Aupagāyana and Mauñjyāyana[913] Nara and Nārāyana are stated to practise the *Sāttvatadharma* in Badarikāśrama for the well being of the world[914] This text is said to have had 100,000 stanzas and to have been condensed subsequently to 16,000 stanzas both for the *jñāna* and *kriyā kāṇḍas*[915]

This *samhitā* is followed in the temple at Śrīraṅgam the glory of which is recounted Vibhīsana arranged for the worship of the Lord here according to the *Pāñcarātra* tradition. The construction of this temple is found to be in strict accordance with the rules given here.

Why this text should be described as ancient in the *Pauskara-saṁhitā* 916 on which it is held to be based, is puzzling. Perhaps such references were interpolated at a later date. Many of the ancient and important *samhitās*[917] like the *Pauṣkara*, *Sāttvata*, *Jayākhya*, and others are mentioned. Besides, there are passages[918] here identical with those in the *Pauṣkara*. Rāmānuja (1017-1137 A D) is the earliest to cite passages from this text which must give it a date prior to 1000 A.D.

912 *PārS*. I 35b-42.

913. *Ibid* I. 72b, 73a

914 *Ibid* I. 73b-74a.

915. *Ibid* I 91b-93a

916. *Ibid* *PauS* XXXIX. 18,

917. *Ibid* I 19

918. Introduction to *Paus*, p. 22.

The *Visvaksena-saṁhitā* contains a little less than 4000 stanzas in 39 chapters. Viṣvaksena expounds the *Pāñcarātra* system to Nārada Chapter VIII has a fresh beginning with Nārada's questions put to Visvaksena, indicating that this may be the first chapter for a section The first seven chapters may therefore be taken to form a different section This, however, is not marked anywhere in the text Besides, the chapters are in the form of a discourse addressed by Visvaksena to Indra. Some of them break off. Chapter 27 is in both prose and verse. The entire work deals only with the *kriyā* and *caryā* aspects.

There must have been either another text with the title '*Visvaksena-saṁhitā*' or another section which dealt with the *jñāna* and *yoga* portions. This is evident from the citations made from this work by Pillai Lokācārya, Vedāntadeśika and Maṇavāla-mahāmuni in their works The last-mentioned teacher made full use of this *samhitā* in his commentary on the *Tattvatraya* of Pillai Lokācārya This section is not now available From the citations it appears that this text contained God's discourse to Viṣvaksena

An account of what this lost portion contained may be briefly given thus Both the Highest Place and the created world are subject to the control of Viṣṇu and Śrī [919]

Vide:

अस्या मम च शेषा हि विभूतिरुभयात्मिका ।
इति श्रुतिशिरःसिद्धं मच्छास्त्रेष्वपि मानद ॥

Those who are well-versed in *Vedānta* declare that God's forms are five—*Para*, *Vyūha*, *Vibhava*, *Niyata* (*Antaryāmin*) and *Arcā*. The last-mentioned is anthropomorphic and is full of compassion.[920] The *Vyūha* deities together constitute a group

919. *RTS*, II. p. 225.
920. *TTr*, *Bh*, p. 182.

and Vāsudeva is said to be supreme. The devotees are to worship Him according to their varying abilities. These four forms emanate from the ever-manifest form. Another group of five on this basis is made up of Para Vāsudeva who is ever manifest (*nityodita*) and the four *Vyūha* deities periodically manifest (*śāntodita*). Another grouping is according to the four stages of waking, dream, deep sleep and the transcendental consciousness presided over by Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Saṅkarsaṇa and Vāsudeva respectively[921] Sankarsaṇa teaches the *Vedas* and the *Pāñcarātra* Pradyumna introduces all religious rites which are to be performed. Aniruddha reveals the nature of the self[922] The Lord has four arms in this last-mentioned group, two in the second, and Para Vāsudeva is dark in complexion with four arms[923] The number of *vibhava-avatāras* is said to be 30 as against the 39 mentioned in the *Ahirbudhnya-samhitā* Upendra, Dadhibhakta, and Hayagrīva are also mentioned as divine descents[924]

There descents are of two kinds, principal and secondary. In the former, God comes down in person. In the latter He enters into a body, through His own nature or His power, whether it is to take the body of an animal, or a plant like the short mango tree in the Dandakāraṇya forest, or a secondary form like that of Brahmā or Śiva. All these are taken up by Him at His sweet will and pleasure[925]

The *antaryāmin* form is stated to be like a relation, ever present, whether the self is in heaven or hell[926]

921. *Ibid.* p. 193.
922. *Ibid.* pp. 186-188.
923. *Ibid.* p. 193
924. *Ibid.* p. 193. Vide :—*AhS.* V. 50-67a.
925. *Ibid.* pp. 189, 190.
926. *Ibid*, p. 202.

Vide ·

अन्तर्यामिस्वरूपश्च सर्वेषां बन्धुवत्स्थितम् ।
स्वर्गनरकप्रवेशेऽपि बन्धुरात्मा हि केशवः ॥

The *arcā* form is like a relation to all. It is within the easy reach of the devotees[927] It is said that the six qualities (*sādguṇya*) are present in an unexcelled way in the *mantra* and idol, thereby meaning that the worship of the idol is as good as visualizing God through the *mantras*. God is present alike in both[928]

Vide :

सर्वातिशायि षाड्गुण्यं संस्थितं मन्त्रबिम्बयोः ।

He is the object denoted in the *mantra* and remains in the idol out of compassion for the people.[929]

Vide :

मन्त्रे वाच्यात्मना नित्यं बिम्बे तु कृपया स्थितम् ॥

God Himself states that in the five forms He is accessible more easily in every succeeding form, thereby meaning that He is most easily accessible in the *arcā* form[930]

Vide :

एवं पञ्चप्रकारोऽहमात्मनां पततामधः ।
पूर्वस्मादपि पूर्वस्मात् ज्यायांश्चैवोत्तरोत्तरः ॥
सौलभ्यतो जगत्स्वामी ह्युत्तरोत्तरः ॥

927. *Ibid.* p. 199.

928. *RTS.* I. p. 424.

929. *Tattvatrayaculaka*, p. 218.

930. *TTr. Bh.* p. 202.

One must take interest and care to worship God in the arca form as if He was powerless, dependent and fit to be protected.[931]

Vide :

> चिन्तयेच्च जगन्नाथं स्वामिनं परमार्थतः ।
> अशक्तमस्वतन्त्रं च रक्ष्यश्चापि जनार्दनम् ॥

Certain deities are forbidden to be worshipped Arjuna, Vyāsa, Paraśurāma, Kubera and some others are included in this list [932]

Those who get released and reach the Highest Place are atomic in size and radiate spiritual atoms of the size of the triad [933]

The *Viṣṇu-saṃhitā* has about 3000 stanzas in 30 chapters. A sage called Sumati instructs Aupagāyana on *Pāñcarātra* doctrines. It contains a brief and lucid account of the doctrines on the *caryā* and *kriyā* aspects of the *Āgama*. It gives an interesting classification of the devotees of Vāsudeva [934]

The *Pādma-saṃhitā* contains more than 9000 stanzas in 82 chapters. It has four sections, *Jñāna*, *Yoga*, *Kriyā* and *Caryā*, with 12,5,32 and 33 chapters respectively

The *jñāna* section begins with an account of the circumstance which brought the *saṃhitā* into being At the bidding of Brahmā, sage Saṃvarta went to Pātāla and learnt the system from Kapila who gave his version of this *Āgama* in one

931. *Ibid*. p. 202

932. *Ibid*. p. 202.

933 Schrader, p. 67n. cites a passage from *ViS*. which text is not available.

934. *VS*. II. 26-53. Cf. *SA*. Appendix, III.

and a half crore stanzas. He returned to earth and taught the doctrines to Kaṇva and others who are the interlocutors in this *saṁhitā*.

The Lord is said to have promulgated the system. He is referred to as Ādideva.[935] Among the two derivations offered to the name '*Pāñcarātra*', the word '*rātra*' is taken in the sense of lustre and it is held that the other five systems[936] became lustreless by the side of this system. The second interpretation takes the word as dead or ineffective in the sense that the other systems became worthless by the side of this system.[937] The *Pāñcarātra* system is said to be of four *siddhāntas*[938] The number of texts is said to be 108.[939] The evolution of *vyūhas*, divine descents,[940] the nature of *Brahman*,[941] the process of creation and the means of getting *mokṣa* are dealt with in this section. *Sālokya* is said to be the kind of *mokṣa* in which the self becomes one with *Brahman*, like the water in the river mingling with the water in the sea.[942] The *tattvas* are enumerated to be fiftyone in number.[943] The created world is described in all its varieties[944] The purpose of the Lord's holding the conch, discus, lotus and club is stated thus:

स्थित्यै चक्रं सरसिजं दधानं सृष्टये पुनः ।
मुक्तये पाञ्चजन्यं च गदां संहृतये तथा ॥

935. *PāS* I 1 18

936 The other systems are *Śaiva Yoga, Sāṃkhya, Bauddha* and *Jaina*. Vide. *Ibid*. I 1, 47-55.

937. *Ibid* I 1, 74.

938. *Ibid*. I. 1, 80-97a.

939 *Ibid*. I. 1, 98-116.

940 *Ibid*. I. 2, 6b-49.

941 *Ibid*. I. 3 ; 6, 29-40.

942. *Ibid* I. 6, 50-53. Note that *sāyujya* also is mentioned in I. 8, 34.

943. *Ibid*. I. 8, 39-48.

944. *Ibid*. I. 9, 12.

The second section is on *yoga* as a means to get *mokṣa*. *Karmayoga* and *jñānayoga* are the two kinds of *yoga*. The former consists in fixing the mind on doing what is enjoined in the *Vedas*. The latter is of the nature of fixing the mind on attaining the highest goal.[945] Yogic practices as laid down by Patañjali[946] are discussed in detail with slight alterations to suit the purpose of the *Āgama*. The object of meditation is described to be Viṣṇu.[947]

The third section, *Kriyāpāda*, treats the ways and means of constructing the temple and installation of idols there. The religious leader or preceptor is to take charge of the entire proceedings starting from the selection of sites which are said to be of four kinds.[948] Locality for this is of eight kinds[949] Fortynine kinds of temples are enumerated and described.[950] This is followed by the selection to be made for the making of the *Mūlabera* which should be of a specific colour.[951] Four chapters are devoted to the installation of the images.[952] The section ends with the methods of domestic worship[953]

In the same section, mention is made of the five forms of God (*pañcamūrti*) with the form of Viṣṇu at the head of the four *vyūha* forms.[954] The Supreme Being is referred to as Ādimūrti[955]

945 *Ibid*, II 1 4, 5
946 *YS* II 29
947 *Ibid.* II 6 8b-16.
948 *Ibid* III 1 22a
949 *Ibid* III 2
950 *Ibid.* III 8.
951. *Ibid.* III 11, 14.
952. *Ibid.* III. 25 to 28.
953 *Ibid* III 32
954 *Ibid.* III 2, 29, 30.
955. *Ibid.* III. 16, 49b.

The five forms,[956] Vāsudeva, Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Ananta, are to be installed. All these suggest that the *Vaikhānasa* tradition must have been the basis for the development of the *Pāñcarātra*,

Six idols are required to be installed in the temple. A temple with all the six is said to be of the best kind, with three of the middle kind and with only one of the lowest kind.

Vide :

कर्मार्चादिप्रकृतेः प्रकारः कथ्यतेऽधुना ।
कर्मार्चा चोत्सवार्चा च बल्यर्चा च तथैव च ॥
स्नानतीर्थोभयार्चा च स्वापोत्थानार्चया सह ।
प्रतिमाः षट् विधातव्याः पूजायामुत्तमा भवेत् ॥
तिसृभिर्मध्यमा ज्ञेया आद्यया चरमा भवेत् ।

III. 19. 1 3a.

The fourth section, *Caryāpāda*, deals with the methods of worshipping God. Those who follow the *Ekāyana* recension have the primary qualification for attending to the acts of worship. Others, who choose to adopt this method, have only a secondary status[957] Initiation (*dīkṣā*) bestows on those who are not otherwise qualified for any Vedic ritual, the required qualification[958] The second and third chapters give an elaborate description of the procedure to be followed for initiation The details contained in Chapters I-IV prove that the rites of the *Pāñcarātra* are not anti-Vedic Worship that is conducted every day is called *Nityotsava* and this is to be done for the welfare of the country as a whole. Varieties of dance

956. *Ibid.* III. 18. 66-68, Cf. *SA*, XXIX. 70b-71a, where Aniruddha takes the place of Ananta

957 *Ibid.* IV 1. 3b-5.

958, *Ibid*, IV, I. 6-9,

poses and musical instruments that are to be used show that worship of God is not simply a Vedic ritual but is a feast to the eyes and ears, giving rise to immense delight to the participants and spectators.[959] Chapter VI describes how God is to be worshipped in the house. Attentions to God (*upacāra*) are said to be 128 in number.[960] *Yātrāsana*[961] is an additional stage which the other texts do not mention. Several *maṇḍalas* (and *Cakrābjamaṇḍala* in particular) are treated in Chapter VII. The ceremonial bath (*snapana*)—its most difficult kind is *Sahasra-kalaśābhiṣeka*—finds a detailed treatment in Chapters VIII and IX respectively. Chapters X and XI give a detailed account of the conduct of annual festivals. Chapter XIII contains a lucid account of the daily routine divided into five kinds. Expiatory rites are described along with the *mantras* which are to be used.[962] The differences among the four *siddhāntas* are discussed in Chapter XXI. *Mudrā* is described as a particular arrangement of fingers. The two palms should be smeared with sandal paste before *mudrā* is formed. This *saṁhitā* enumerates fiftytwo of them and describes each one of them.[963] Chapter 23 is devoted to the role of *mantras* in worship. The *mantra* enables the person who utters it to reflect upon all beings. It saves one who recites it from bondage.

Vide:

मननं सर्वसत्त्वानां त्राणं संसारसागरात् ।
मननत्राणसंयोगान्मन्त्र इत्युच्यते बुधैः ॥

IV. 23. 96b-97a.

959. *Ibid.* IV 5.

960. For the sake of convenience, 16 of them are enumerated: IV. 6. 62-64.

961. *Ibid.* IV 6 39a.

962. *Ibid.* IV 18, 19.

963. *Ibid.* IV. 22.

Another direction that is given here is that *mantra* is to be well guarded as a secret. The suffix '*ra*' is used here in the masculine gender.[964] The *mantras* are stated to yield relatively higher results in different *yugas*[965] This chapter describes also how one could recite the particular *mantras* and succeed in getting full benefits from them. The *Dvādaśākṣara*, *Aṣṭākṣara* and *Viṣṇugāyatrī* are *mantras* of the *vibhavas*; those of the other forms of Viṣṇu like Yajñavarāha, Śrī and others are elaborately treated in Chapters 24-33. Sudarśana *mantra* takes up the whole of Chapter 32. Not only the *mantras* of those deities who form the retinue of Visnu get a significant place, but also of the seven *Yakṣiṇīs* (Sundarī, Manoharā, Kāmeśvarī, Padminī, Yāminī, Maithunapriyā and Ratipriyā)[966] The *mantras* of *piśācas* are then described. *Pādma*, *Sanatkumāra Parama*, *Pādmodbhava*, *Māhendra* and *Kāṇvatantra* are said to be the best texts[967]

This *saṁhitā*, which is based on the *Jayākhya*, is intended to be used in the temple at Kāñcī Yet, it has become more popular than other texts by reason of giving complete information on all aspects of the *Āgama* This is therefore adopted as the standard text wherever the *Pāñcarātra* mode prevails

The *Purusottama-saṁhitā* has one thousand stanzas in 34 chapters. The *Kriyā* and *Caryā* aspects of the *Āgama* are dealt with here The *Nāradīya-samhitā* has a little above 3500 stanzas in 30 chapters. Bhṛgu teaches the doctrines to Atri Vāsudeva is stated to have sprung from Viṣṇu He is *Paramahaṁsa*. Saṅkarṣaṇa is *Vyoman*, Pradyumna is *Nāda*, and Aniruddha is *Haṁsa*. Vāsudeva is also stated to be Puruṣa, Saṅkarṣaṇa is Satya, Pradyumna is Acyuta and Nārāyaṇa is Aniruddha.[968]

964 *Ibid.* IV. 23. 97b-98a

965. *Ibid.* IV. 23. 94b-95.

966 *Ibid.* IV. 33. 154-169.

967. See under fn. 757.

968 I, 23-46.

It is not clear whether this depiction of *Vyūha* represents an attempt at reconciling the *Pāñcarātra* and *Vaikhānasa* concepts of Godhead. Another interesting feature is the spirit of tolerance noticed n Chapters VII and XI, which contain an exposition of the system of Śaivism. Worship of Śiva is said to bring certain benefits.[969] Different kinds of offerings to God are recommended.[970]

The *Mārkaṇḍeya-saṁhitā*, which has about 2500 stanzas in 32 chapters, discusses the *caryā* and *kriyā* aspects. Mārkaṇḍeya discourses on these to King Pṛthu. In 8 chapters of 3500 *ślokas*, the *Viṣṇutilaka-saṁhitā* discusses *yoga*, *mantras* and festivals. The information on these topics is highly useful for supplementing the study of other works. Each chapter has a very large number of stanzas. Brahmā discourses on these topics to the sages. The *Viśvāmitra-saṁhitā*, containing about 2700 stanzas in 27 chapters dealing with the *caryā* and *kriyā* aspects, is in the form of a discourse by Viśvāmitra delivered to Kāśyapa who became dissatisfied with the systems of *Mimāṁsā* and *Vedānta*. Viśvāmitra had received this doctrine from Brahmā. The following stanzas explain what the word '*bhaga*' means when it is applied to Bhagavān.

ज्ञानं निःसीममैश्वर्यमनन्यपुरुषाश्रयम् ।
सर्वातिशायिनी शक्तिः बलं सर्वोत्तमं तथा ॥
अन्यैरहार्यं वीर्यं च तेजः सर्वोत्तरोत्तरम् ।
एतेन षड्गुणैर्व्यन्ते भगशब्देन ॥ IV 2-4.

Cosmology and the *Dvādaśākṣaramantra* are dealt with in Chapters 4, 5 and 7

The *Śrīpraśna-saṁhitā* has about 5500 stanzas in 54 chapters, Nārāyaṇa expounds the doctrines in answer to questions put by

969. *Ibid*. 42-44, 45a.
970. XII. 2-4.

Śrī, and hence the title. There are certain passages here which are identical with those in the *Sāttvata* and *Īśvara saṁhitās*, perhaps borrowed from them. It is mostly devoted to the *caryā* and *kriyā* aspects and gives useful information on the conduct of festivals in temples. Separate chapters are devoted to the treatment of *yoga*, *pañcakālaprakriyā*, *prapatti* and rules of expiation.

Saṅkarṣaṇa descended as Narasiṁha through a portion of His power and Pradyumna became Rāma.[971] God tells Lakṣmī that till the time He gave this account, neither the enlightened ones (*jñānins*) and *yogins*, nor others were aware of the *arcā* form.

Vide:

एतावत्कालपर्यन्तं ज्ञानिनो योगिनोऽपि वा ।
इतरे वा नाभ्यजानन्नर्चारूपं वरानने ॥

IV. 5b, 6a

This passage is evidence to show that the *arcā* form of God is not very ancient in its origin. *Yogic* practice is stated to be the means for obtaining *mokṣa*.

This *saṁhitā* is followed in the Śrī Śārṅgapāṇisvāmī temple at Kumbhakoṇam and has several expressions which are of Tamil origin.[972] Many festivals which are held in the temples of South India, Tamil Nadu in particular, are mentioned.[973] Several dance poses, musical melodies and instruments are also referred to. There are other *saṁhitās*, most of them dealing generally with *caryā* and *kriyā*. They treat of the construction of temples, the conduct of festivals and expiatory rites. *Yogic*

971 Ibid. XLVII 40b, 44, 45a

972 *Karandaka*, XV. 8; *maddala*, XV. 67. *uddharani*, XV. 28. *alakṣyeṇa*, XLIV. 8; *maryādā*, XLVI. 78.

973. *Plava*, XXXIX, *Adhyayanotsava*, XLVI 59, *Śikyotsava*, XXXIX 54.

practices and linguistic occultism do not get much attention in some of these works. In the treatment of the subjects, between one text and another there is not much difference.

Much importance cannot be attached to the enumeration of the names of *saṁhitās* in some of the texts. For example, in the *Pādma*, *Mārkaṇḍeya* and *Hayaśīrṣa saṁhitās* and the *Visnutantra* their own names head the lists. On the other hand, the *Kapiñjala*, *Pārameśvara*, *Bhāradvāja* and *Viśvāmitra saṁhitās* and the *Māhendra tantra* mention the name of a *saṁhitā* other than their own at the head of these lists Firstly, there is no evidence to show that the order in which the texts are enumerated was the same in which they were composed If the order was meant to declare the precedence of one over another, then all the lists should reveal uniformity in their enumeration. Secondly, there is no evidence also to show that this enumeration of the texts was not interpolated subsequent to the composition of the works in which they get mentioned Thirdly, such lists as those in the *Pādma*, *Mārkandeya* and other *saṁhitās* commence with their own names as heading those lists, perhaps to lay emphasis on themselves as more important than those whose names are enumerated there Lastly, reliance must be placed on other pieces of evidence such as references made in one text to others, like the *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā* and *Lakṣmītantra* referring to the *Sāttvata* and *Jayākhya*. Significance must also be attached to the mention of some texts as great. Until more information is available regarding the contents of the *saṁhitās* now preserved only in manuscripts, it will not be practicable to have an estimate of their contribution Besides, the texts that have been mentioned here are the most important ones which the leading exponents of Vaiṣṇavism have chosen to cite in support of various topics.

CHAPTER VIII

ĀGAMAS AND VAIṢṆAVA LITERATURE

The system of Viśiṣṭādvaita represents the philosophical side of Vaiṣṇavism. The term came to be used to refer to a system of philosophy which is based primarily on the *Upaniṣads* and was developed by a long line of writers like Bodhāyana, Nāthamuni, Yāmunācārya and Rāmānuja. Because of its tenets, it was referred to by expressions like *viśiṣṭadravyaikya*,[974] *dravyaikya* and others. Sudarśana Sūri (1300 A.D.) was the earliest writer to use the expression, '*viśiṣṭādvaita*', to refer to the system.[975]

As philosophy, the system of Vaiṣṇavism grew and developed on the triple foundations of the *Upaniṣads*, *Brahmasūtras* and *Bhagavadgītā*. The *Purāṇas*, notably the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, the *Vaisnava Āgamas*, *Vaikhānasa* and *Pāñcarātra*, and the *Nālāyiradivyaprabandha* in Tamil provided the basis for the growth of the religious aspect. Philosophy with its theory and religion with its practice, have blended harmoniously to give rise to a system (call it a creed or by any other name) which provided suffering humanity with the means to get over the ills of the world and lead a happy and prosperous life here and hereafter. So the philosophical basis has not been free from the religious tinge and the foundations of its religion have a philosophical background. Vaiṣṇavism has a glorious heritage which did not discard either the philosophical or the religious background. It is a result of a synthesis of an ecstatic and rapturous experience of the bewitching beauty of God and an

974 *Śrībhāṣya* I, p. 184 (Venkateswar Press, Madras); *Nyāyasudarśana*, p 1317.

975 *Vedārthasaṅgraha* with *Tātparyadīpikā* (Brindavan edition) p. 46; *Śrutaprakāśikā*, p 918.

intellectual insight into the problems of reality. Thus neither was reason undermined, nor emotion given a stoic burial.

Brahman, which is qualified by the sentient and insentient beings, is Bhagavān, Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu in Vaiṣṇavism. Nothing exists outside *Brahman*, while everything exists as His mode or attribute; and it is only by admitting this that the names of 'Bhagavān' and others become meaningful. These names occur frequently in the *Āgamas* 976 and the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* 977 Their full significance is brought out in the *Āgamas*.978 The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* 979 does offer explanations for the use of these with reference to God. Whether this work is indebted to the *Āgamas* or vice-versa is a problem that cannot be solved now for want of adequate evidence A synthesis was effected by treating *Brahman* as identical with Bhagavān, Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu.

As a result of this, *Brahman* came to be looked upon as *saguṇa* and among the qualities, six (*jñāna*, *vīrya*, *bala*, *aiśvarya*, *śakti* and *tejas*) are considered outstanding 980 Still, God is considered as having countless qualities on the strength of the Paurāṇic and epic descriptions.981 While God is required to

976. *LT* II 3, XI, 1; XIV 1; XV 9; XVII 5; *AhS* II 22; VI 20; XLIV, 34b, LIII 12a The *Vaikhānasa* texts use the word 'Viṣṇu' often to refer to Ultimate Reality and also designate Him as Ādimūrti; *KA* I 1; *SA* XXXVII 4, *VK* pp. 249, 503 Sometimes He is referred to as Nārāyaṇa, *VK* p 497 Vide:

तस्य परब्रह्मणो परमात्मनो नारायणस्य ।

VK p. 491.

977 *VP* I 1, 31, I 3 4; II. 6, 41; III. 11, 94; V. 37-66, *Cf* *Bh* I, 3 1; *Varāhapurāṇa*, XC 3.

978. *AhS* LII; *SA* XXXI 64.

979. *VP* I 4. 6; V. 6, 78-80, 82

980. *LT* II, 26-36; *VP*, VI. 5, 79, 85.

981. *Vāmana Purāṇa*, LXXIV, 40, *Mbh. Karṇa*, LXXXIII, 15.

have a body, according to these latter sources, in order to justify His several names,[982] the *Āgamas* remained content to recognize the Ultimate Reality as having a body in the form of these six qualities.[983] The negative references,[984] which amounted to an interpretation of them as representing the absence of defects in God, gave rise to the evolution of another concept, namely, absence of those qualities which are fit to be avoided. In this, the *Āgamas*[985] have played a significant role, of course following the line of treatment in the *Upanisads*. This aspect of the *saguṇatva* of *Brahman* is found in the *Pāñcarātra* alone, It has influenced Rāmānuja in describing *Brahman* as opposed to all that is to be avoided and a store-house of multitudes of natural and countless auspicious qualities of unlimited excellence

Vide :

निखिलहेयप्रत्यनीकः ... स्वाभाविकानवधिकातिशयासंख्येय-कल्याणगुणगणाकरः ।

Vedārthasaṅgraha, p. 43.

An important feature in the treatment of *Brahman* in the *Agamas* is that He is ever associated with Śrī. Śrī is Śakti latent in *Brahman* Both have full powers to create, protect

982. *Mbh Śānti*. CCVI 50, *Varāhapurāṇa*, XXXIV.XL

983 *AhS*, vi 25a, ix. 32b; *LT* xi. 2, Cf *AhS*, xxxii. 64-69; *LT* xxix 19; xxxvi. 60-63. *VK*, pp. 492-3, 578

984. Vide

य आत्मापहतपाप्मा विजरो विमृत्युर्विशोको विजिघत्सोऽपिपासः सत्यकामः सत्यसङ्कल्पः ।

985 *ChU* viii. 1 5. Cf.

अप्राकृतगुणस्पर्शं निर्गुणं परिकीर्त्यते ।

AhS ii. 55a, *AhS*. ii. 23b, 24; 28a, Cf. *ibid*. xxxv 67, *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, vi, 11, 19.

and destroy the world Both have over-lordship over created beings.[986] The two become a single reality, as it were[987] Since God cannot be ever dissociated from Śakti, *Brahman* is said to be non-dual.

Vide :

अपृथग्भूतशक्तित्वाद्द्वैतं ब्रह्म निष्कलम् ।

LT. XVI 24a.

This is not *Advaita*, for in the latter nothing exists apart from *Brahman* But here Śakti or Śrī exists in *Brahman* She is not noticed when there is no creation, but is made known as distinct from *Brahman* when there is creation. The existence of Śakti in an explicit state is not denied, and so this is a two-in-one reality When both Viṣṇu and Śrī are held as equal in the possession of auspicious qualities, and become the refuge of the selves, there is not much difficulty in explaining the passages in the *Lakṣmītantra*[988] and *Ahirbudhnya-samhitā*[989] which glorify Śrī as having full responsibility for everything.

On the trancendental plane, Viṣṇu and Śrī form a unit as a philosophical principle. But they are referred to as *dharmin* and *dharma*, *bhāva* and *bhavat*, and *ahantā* and *aham* So Śakti or Śrī can be considered as an attribute of Viṣṇu The two are inseparable and so are treated as a single principle. Śrī can therefore be taken as prompting, or acting as accessory to Viṣṇu in creation and other functions *Ahantā* and such other expressions disclose the self-luminous nature of Śrī and so, like an attribute to the substance having it, Śrī acts and brings credit, not to herself but to Visnu. In this way, the attribution of one's function to the other must be understood

986 *LT* II 15-19.

987 भवद्भावस्वरूपेण तत्त्वमेकमिवोदितौ । *AhS*. III, 26b.

988. *LT* IV 5

989. *AhS* V. 3b-5.

Vide .

अन्योन्येनाविनाभावादन्योन्येन समन्वयात् ॥
तादात्म्यं विद्धि संबन्धं मम नाथस्य चोभयोः ।

LT II 17b-18a.

Viṣṇu is the husband of Śrī,[990] and as such both could be treated as a unit as in any *Vedic* ritual. This concept has developments in the *Purāṇas* and epics [991]

The Viśiṣṭādvaita concept of *Brahman* is associated with Viṣṇu and Śrī being recognized as the Divine Couple. The compositions of the *Āzhvārs* subscribe to this view.[992] The *Siddhitraya* has the word '*śrīmati*' as an adjective to '*puruṣe*' in the benedictory stanza [993] Yāmuna's *Catuśślokī* is in sole praise of Śrī Rāmānuja uses the words, 'śrīnivāsa' and 'śriyaḥpati', frequently in his works [994]

990, *LT* xxxviii 8; xi. 21, xx 40, *AhS*, v, 53a, lvi, 13a

991, *VP* I 8, 17; *R*. VI, 120 13.

992, *Mudal Tiruvantādi*, 86, *Tiruvāymozhi* IV 9, 10, VI, 10 10.

993 स्वपरिचरणभोगैः श्रीमति प्रीयमाणे
भवतु मम परस्मिन् पुरुषे भक्तिभूमा ॥

994, श्रुतिशिरसि विदीप्ते ब्रह्मणि श्रीनिवासे ।

Śrībhāṣya, benedictory verse

श्रीमते निर्मलानन्दोदन्वते ब्रह्मणे नमः ।

Vedāntasāra, ibid

श्रियः कान्तोऽनन्तो वरगुणगणैकास्पदवपुः ।

Vedānta-dīpa, ibid.

श्रियः पतिः निखिलहेयप्रत्यनीककल्याणैकतानः ।

Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya, Introductory passage.

Cf. ब्रह्मणि श्रीनिवासाख्ये ह्युत्थानपरिवर्जिता ।

LT, XVI, 31.

The concept of Lakṣmī, developed in the *Lakṣmītantra* and *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā*, is not admitted as such in the Viśiṣṭādvaita system. She does anything only at His command Some thinkers glorify Śrī, heightening her greatness at the expense of Viṣṇu's eminence.[995] It is therefore essential to be cautious in interpreting passages about her in the *Pāñcarātra* texts.

In this context, it is relevant to refer to the place of Śrī in Vaisnavism subsequent to the period of Rāmānuja The Tenkalai school holds that Śrī is a self, the consort of Visnu, ever associated with Him. She is referred to as the mediatrix for the self to win the favour of God Without Her medtation, none can get God's favour This must be understood in the light of a role which an ideal wife plays in favour of her children. The *Āgamas* too lend support to this aspect of Lakṣmī If Śrī were to be on an equal footing with Visnu, then she cannot be a mediator The Vaḍakalai sect treats Śrī and Viṣṇu as equal for all purposes and as the parents of the world She is not only a mediator, but also fit to be attained even as Viṣṇu is. There is no need to exaggerate one view at the expense of the other. A woman has a dual role to play as wife and mother. The two sects have different approaches towards the place of Śrī, which deserve due appreciation It will be prudent to avoid vehemence in criticising either view with the intention of maintaining one's standpoint It is needless therefore to raise the issue as to which view is more correct.

The significance of 'Viśiṣṭādvaita' is explained as 'non-duality or oneness of *Brahman* which is qualified by the sentient

995 *Stotraratna*, 37 : *Catuśśloki*, 3.

शेषशेषाशनादिसर्वपरिजनम् ।

Vaikunṭhagadya.

Cf. *Śrīstuti* 5, 8, 9.

and insentient beings which form its body.[996] Another explanation is that in this system the cause of the world, namely, *Brahman* with the sentient and insentient beings, in Its subtle state, is not different from the effect, namely, the world which is *Brahman* in Its gross state with sentient and insentient beings.[997] The *Vedāntins* cite a well-known passage from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*[998] to support the relation of body and soul between the created beings and *Brahman* in order to fortify the Viśiṣṭādvaita view.

The concept of *Brahman*, as advocated in the *Āgamas*, admits of Śakti's emergence from *Brahman* and disappearance within It at the time of dissolution. From Śakti, both the sentient and insentient beings emerge at creation.[999] Those selves which do not get released during dissolution enter into Śakti. During both the periods of creation and dissolution, *Brahman* alone exists, the created world being only the manifested condition of Śakti. So the oneness (*advaita*) of *Brahman* remains for ever undisturbed. The selves lie there in both the states. This appears to be sufficient for explaining the concept of Viśiṣṭādvaita, if it is remembered that Śakti is only an attribute of *Brahman*. The exponents of Viśiṣṭādvaita have not considered this aspect of the Āgamic concept of *Brahman*, nor is there any clue in the *Āgamas* to support the relation of body and soul between *Brahman* and the world of matter and selves.

996. Vide

यस्य चेतनस्य यद्द्रव्यं सर्वात्मना स्वार्थे नियन्तुं धारयितुं च शक्यं, तच्छेषतैकस्वरूपं च, तत्तस्य शरीरमिति शरीरलक्षणमास्थेयम् ।

Śrī-bhāṣya, II. I, 9.

997. *Śrībhāṣya* with ten commentaries, Madras edn. p. 1001.

998. *BrU*. III. 7. 3-23. This aspect gets an authentic treatment in *God and the Universe in the Vedāntic Theology of Rāmānuja* by Eric J. Lott.

999. *LT*. VI. 36; *AhS*. V. 9-11.

The Āgamic concept stated above regarding *Brahman* offers an explanation in support of treating Him as both the material and instrumental cause for the world *Brahman* is not separate from Śakti Whatever changes take place in Śakti must be admitted to take place in the *dharmin*, namely, *Brahman*. If it could be admitted that Śakti is inanimate, then *Brahman* can be taken as the instrumental cause also. Since Śakti is the same as Lakṣmī, and so animate, and Śakti gets transformed into *prakṛti* and its evolutes, it would be better to take Śakti as the material and instrumental causes of the world Whatever Śakti does, may be ascribed to *Brahman*, and thus the theory of causation stands explained.

The concept of the freedom of *Brahman* from limitations in regard to time, space and objects has support in the *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā* where a passage describes this limitlessness in a variety of ways.[1000]

The *vyūha vibhava* and other aspects of God's existence have been incorporated in the Viśiṣṭādvaita system In this connection, it becomes difficult to explain what inspired the glorious descriptions of God in the Viśiṣṭādvaita works, as there is not much in the *Pāñcarātra* and *Vaikhānasa* texts that could have evoked it. Both the *Āgama* texts describe how the idol that is to be made should look like, the weapons it must hold, its ornaments and postures The methods of constructing the temple structures to serve as shrines for the deities are dealt with in elaborate detail The *Nālāyiraprabandha*, which bears the influence of the *Āgamas*, does not contain much to account for these descriptions, but the poetic imagery in the composition of the Āzhvārs could have suggested the descriptions in ornate style Besides these, there is the *Jitante stotra*, which is written in a classical manner that reminds us of passages in the *Bhāgavata*. The *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata*

1000 *AhS* II 46 53

contains only the opening verse of this *stotra*. It is also doubtful whether this *stotra* was then available in full. The entire work in six sections could have been composed later, keeping that stanza at the beginning

The *Stotraratna*, which is an early devotional lyric of Yāmuna, contains a wealth of stanzas noteworthy for poetic excellence and emotional appeal. Its author appears to have been indebted to the *Jitante-stotra* 1001 Likewise, the *Gadyatraya* of Rāmānuja and his introduction to his *Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya* present grand pictures of the appearance of the Lord. All these were not definitely inspired by *Āgama* texts. While the *Āgamas* speak of only the six qualities, many more qualities which glorify God's attempts to endear Himself to His devotees, are described in a charming way in these works of Rāmānuja. It is quite possible that the Āzhvārs' compositions which depict the glory of the *arcā* form owed much to the *Āgamas*, though in contents there is not much in common between the *Āgamas* and these poems.

There is not anything special in the *Āgamas* regarding the individual self which could have impressed the exponents of Viśiṣṭādvaita. However, it is probable that the *prapatti* doctrine gained admission into Viśiṣṭādvaita as a result of the influence of the *Tiruvāymozhi*, which in turn was inspired by the treatment of this doctrine in the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* texts, particularly in the *Lakṣmītantra* and *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā*. Perhaps, this influence did not allow scope to the paths of *karma* and *jñāna*. The *bhakti* way also suffered the same fate, though not to the extent as the other two. In this respect, the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*, which advocated only the *yoga* way, did not command attention.

Regarding the state of release, the *Āgamas* describe it as related to the Highest Place (*paramapada*). It is made of non-material *sattva*, representing as it were solidified splendour. It

1001 *Stotraratna*, 32-45.

is clear and flawless and it provides limitless bliss Enjoyments there are blissful, regions are blissful and the bodies of the selves which attain are filled, as it were, with knowledge and bliss The Lord's body is made up of the six qualities It is difficult to describe that place[1002] The selves do not suffer from any defect in their senses and they take no food[1003]

In describing the attractiveness of the region which the released souls reach after death, the exponents of Viśiṣṭādvaita have displayed much ingenuity and imagination. They depict an ideal world made up of non-material *sattva* The mansions and halls, quadrangles, parks and pleasure ponds are all pictured as magnificent, the like of which could not exist anywhere. It is called the eternally manifested glory of the Lord The Lord is there, attended by numberless selves, eternally free and released This kind of description is in Rāmānuja's *Vaikunthagadya* and in the *Nityavibhūti* sections in the *Nyāyasiddhāñjana* of Vedānta-deśika and various works by others.

The literature of Viśiṣṭadvaita is vast and varied in form. As far as their dealings with the *Āgamas* are concerned, some works are in the form of *stotras*, some discuss the validity of the *Āgamas* and some others are in the form of manuals of religious practices, particularly of the mode of worship.

The doctrines of the *Pāñcarātra* are found recorded for the first time in the *Nārāyanīya* section of the *Śāntiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*[1004] The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* is the earliest text to treat of Godhead against the background of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines. Visnu, Nārāyana, Bhagavān and Vāsudeva are the names of the Supreme Deity[1005] He has six qualities and is free from

1002 *AhS* VI 22-25a, 31 . LT. XVII 9-15.
1003 *LT* VI 16
1004. *Mbh. Śānti*, ch 342-360.
1005 *VP* VI. 5. 79, 80, 82, 87.

defects.[1006] He has a form made up of powers which take the shape of the universe.[1007] Śrī is ever with Him and is all-pervasive like Him [1008] She grants the fruit of *mokṣa* [1009] She and Viṣṇu are the Divine Couple, and none is superior to them.[1010] The Highest Place is full of knowledge, pure and imperishable [1011] The *vyūha* theory is well-known and gets frequent reference giving the names of the four deities [1012]

There are other *Purāṇas*[1013] which refer to the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines. Some, however, condemn them [1014] The *Bhāgavata* contains references to the *Āgama* mode of worship, types of *arcā* forms and the advantages of adopting this kind of worship, The *vyūha* forms of God are also referred to. *Bhakti* receives prominent treatment here and *prapatti* also is extolled as the means of salvation. [1015]

The *Jitante-stotra*, which is held as fit for recitation during the five times during the day when God is to be worshipped, is a perfect *Pāñcarātra* work The first stanza is given a detailed exposition in the *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā*,[1016] and this is proof that it was composed before the *Saṁhitā*. The other stanzas in the six sections could have been composed later. It advocates

1006 *Ibid.* I. 22. 53; V. 1. 47; VI. 5. 85

1007. *Ibid.* VI. 7 70.

1008. *Ibid.* I 8 17, I. 9. 142-145.

1009 *Ibid* I 9. 120.

1010. *Ibid.* I 8. 35.

1011. *Ibid* I 8 51, 56; II. 8. 102-105

1012. *Ibid.* V. 18. 58.

1013 *Viṣṇudharmottara*, Part III, *Padma P*, *Uttara* LXXXVIII, *Narasiṃha P*. XIII. *Agni P*. XXV, XXIX. XXX, XXXIX; XLIV, XLVI-XLIX, LXX; XXIII & XXVII refer to *navavyūha*, *Garuḍa P*. XII. 14-16. *Brahmavaivarta P*. XXVI *Varāha P*, 99. 27a mentions Balarāma in the place of Saṁkarṣaṇa, *Liṅga P* II, 7 For further references, see *PR*.

1014. *Kūrma P*.

1015 *Bh*. XI. 87, for varieties of *arcā*, see *Ibid*. XI. 27. 12. Cf. *Ibid*. XI. 2. 15; 5. 29; 27. 49.

1016 *AhS*, LIII.

prapatti[1017] God is said to have no form which can serve to identify Him Yet He presents Himself to His devotees[1018] in a human form There is devout fervour throughout this work, and it is likely that it was composed under the influence of works like the *Bhāgavata*[1019] This hymn contains a glorious description of the Highest Place, the appearance of the Lord there, the *ṣāḍguṇya vyūha*, the *pañcakāla*, the *sāyujya* kind of communion in *mokṣa*, and the five forms of God.[1020] The last section gives a beautiful description of the Lord with all materials necessary to offer worship to Him. One should wish for the conduct of daily, fortnightly and monthly festivals, with all attendant music and several kinds of food preparations. The devotee must attend on Him and render service to Him by offering whatever valuable possessions he has and can procure. There must be desire for this spiritual atmosphere to continue for years[1021] This section is based on both the *Pāñcarātra* and *Vaikhānasa Āgamas* which treat these aspects of duties and services.

The *Nālāyira prabandha*, which contains the spontaneous outpourings of God-intoxicated divine saints called Āzhvārs, speaks of the Lord's glory in various ways. The Supreme Being is formless and has unsurpassed bliss and countless qualities.[1022] Yet He takes the forms in which His devotees wish to visualize

1017 *Jitante Stotra* I 2
1018 *Ibid* I 5
1019 *Ibid.* I 19, 20
1020 *Ibid* II 31, IV 5
1021 *Ibid* II 18-20; 21-25; 30, 31; VI 4-9
Cf *Hayaśīrṣa-saṁhitā*, I. 24

मोक्षं सालोक्यसारूप्यं प्रार्थये न कदाचन ।
इच्छाम्यहं महाबाहो सायुज्यं तव सुव्रत ॥

Jitante, II. 36,

Ibid, V. 8.

1022. *Tiruvāymozhi*, I. 1. 1., *Tiruccandaviruttam*, 17.

Him.[1023] The *vyūha* doctrine is referred to directly and also through the colours which God assumes in each *yuga*[1024] The divine descents are graphically depicted Frequent references are made to the *antaryāmin* aspect of God[1025] Numerous are the descriptions of the *arcā* forms enshrined in many temples of India[1026] The initiatory rite of *pañcasaṁskāra*[1027] in its aspect of receiving the marks of the conch and *discus*, which the *Pāñcarātra* system enjoins, is referred to, as also the *aṣṭākṣarī* and the *dvādaśākṣarī mantras*[1028] The doctrine of *prapatti* arose on the foundations of the *Bhagavadgītā*[1029] Yet, it gets its exposition in the *Pāñcarātra Āgamas*[1030] It was actually practised by the Āzhvārs[1031] who thus reveal the *Āgamic* influence.

The compositions of the Āzhvārs refer to the forms of the *mūlabera* in various shrines and also to the conduct of festivals[1032] The public festivals, which include processions

1023 *Mudal Tiruvantadi* 44

1024. *Tiruccandaviruttam*, 4, 17, 44; *Nānmukhan Tiruvantādi*, 34.

1025 *Mudal Tiruvantādi*, 09, *Mūnrām Tiruvantādi* 94, *Periya Tiruvantādi*, 68

1026 *Mudal Tiruvantadi* 77, *Tiruccandaviruttam*, 46-64, *Periya Tirumozhi* I 7; II 3, III 8 VI, 4 VII, 3; IX 10, *Tiruvāymozhi*, V 8, V 8; V 7; X 7; X 8 *Mūnrām Tiruvantādi*, 28, 62, 68-72,

1027 *Pallāndu*, 7; *Periyazhvār Tirumozhi*, V, 4 1.

1028. *Mudal Tiruvantadi* 67, *Tiruccandaviruttam*, 77, 78, *Periya Tirumozhi*, I 8, 9,

1029 *BhG* xviii 66

1030. *AhS* xxxvii, 21-31 *LT* xvii 59-82

1031 *Tiruvāymozhi* VI, 10 10; *Tiruccandaviruttam*, 92

1032 The compositions of the Azhvārs depict the deities of the temples in their *dhruva* form This does not mean that other forms were not known to them The *Āgamas* and customary worship give primary importance to the *dhruva* form and other forms take a secondary place. Icons other than those in the *dhruva* form are also referred to by the Āzhvārs. Vide *Perumāl Tirumozhi*, I-III; *Periya Tirumozhi*, II, 2, II 6, V, 3, V, 7, X, 1, 7; *Mudal Tiruvantādi*, 77; *Mūnrām Tiruvantādi*, 28; *Tiruccandaviruttam*: 61, 63

through the streets, are described with reference to the icon called the *utsava bera* The *Āgamas* contain elaborate procedures for conducting the installation of five or six idols in every shrine, and primary significance is attached to the *mūlabera* which is mostly referred to in Āzhvārs' works That the other idols including the one which is taken in processions, were not current in the period of the Āzhvārs cannot be maintained. Besides, most of the *Āgamas* which were composed long before the period of the Āzhvārs, refer to the installation of the various kinds of idols, which should point to their actual use Since the shrines are governed in their rituals either by the *Pāñcarātra* or the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*, it must be admitted that the Āzhvārs' compositions bear the influence of both the *Āgamas*.

The first writer who took inspiration from the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* was Yāmuna (916-1041 A D) whose *Catuśślokī* glorifies Śrī. She gives shelter to all and Her glory cannot be measured by Herself or even by Her Lord. Her grace alone can make people remain happy, while they are in bondage; and also enable them to get *moksa*. The entire glory of the Highest Place and the Lord's prosperity depend solely on Her will. This hymn of praise is based on the purport of some passages in the *Lakṣmītantra* and *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā* which take the word 'Śrī' in several senses.[1033] They speak of Śrī as the highest deity,

1033 Vide

श्रणाति निखिलान् च्छ्रीणाति च गुणैर्जगत् ॥
श्रीयते चाखिलैर्नित्यं श्रयते परं पदम् ।
लेशतः स्थूल उद्दिष्टः श्रिय एष महामुने ॥

AhS. LT 61b. 62.

श्रृणोमि करुणां वाचं श्रृणामि दुरितं सताम् ॥

LT. L. 79b.

श्रृणामि गुणैर्विश्वं शरणं चास्मि शाश्वतम् ।

Ibid. L. 80a.

perhaps after the fashion of the *Sākta Āgamas* which raise Śakti above all, including Śiva. The four stanzas of Yāmuna offer no surprise to us, as their import is not different from that of the passages of the *saṁhitās* referred to above.

Another work of Yāmuna is the *Stotraratna* in 65 stanzas, glorifying the greatness of the Lord. One among them[1034] speaks of *prapatti* as the most convenient method of getting God's protection and refers to the paths of *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti* as hard to be practised. The *Pāñcarātra Āgamas* enjoin that food offered to God be offered to Viṣvaksena to avoid the sin of taking *nirmālya* which is also called as *śeṣa* (Hence Viṣvaksena is called Śeṣāśana) Yāmuna refers to Viṣvaksena as attending on God and describes him as Śeṣabhojin[1035]

Yāmuna's *Āgamaprāmāṇya* is the first extant work which seeks to establish the validity of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* At the

श्रयामि श्रयणीयास्मि शक्तिभी रैमि रामि च ॥
शक्तेरुज्ज्वलिनी चास्मि शांतमा रुचिरीदिसता ।
इति अच्यन्ततत्त्वज्ञाः श्रियं मां विदुरञ्जसा ॥

Ibid, L 82b 83,

"श्रु श्रवणे," "शृ हिंसायाम्," "शॄ विस्तारे" इति धातवः ।

Commentary on *LT*. L 80b.

श्रयामि विष्णुम् । श्रयणीया ; शक्तिभिर्जयाद्भिः सेव्या ।
रैमि ; आश्रितपापानि क्षिणोमि । रामि ; सर्वान् कामान् ददामि ।

Ibid. on 82b, 83.

1034. *Stotrartna*, 22.

1035, Vide :

निवेदितं च यद्द्रव्यं पुष्पं फलमथापि वा ॥
तन्निर्माल्यमिति प्रोक्तं तत्प्रयत्नेन वर्जयेत् ।

SKS Śiva, V 48b. 49a.

outset, he shows that the validity of the *Āgama* cannot be assailed by arguments based on any *pramāna.* Its validity is proved on the ground that Nārāyaṇa Himself revealed it[1036] Incidentally, the Naiyāyika's proof for God's existence is examined and rejected[1037] The Prābhākara theory of the validity only of injunctive statements is rejected, and it is shown that statements on already existent objects could also be valid[1038]

It is further shown that the *Pāñcarātra* system does not censure the *Veda*; the treatment there of matters not dealt with in the *Veda* does not point to its invalidity; moreover, it is admitted as valid by Bhrgu, Bharadvāja, Vyāsa and others. The words, '*Bhāgavata*' and '*Sāttvata*' are of course used to refer to those who follow the *Pāñcarātra* tradition and offer service in temples. Though the authors of the *Smrtis*, like Manu and Uśanas, declare that the *Bhāgavatas* and *Sāttvatas* are of low origin, it must be observed that the people who are called by these names belong to the *Ekāyana Śākhā* and the *Vājasaneya Yajurveda* and have Vedic study, observe the sacraments and belong to the Bhāradvāja, Kāśyapa and other *gotras*, like any other Brahmins The words also point to men of low birth, but these are distinct from the followers of the *Pāñcarātra* An analogous case is provided by the word, '*ācārya*', which is generally used to refer to a learned Brahmin. But it also denotes a lowly Vaiśya Some words convey more than one meaning. The priests who are called '*Bhāgavatas*' and '*Sāttvatas*' perform worship of the *pāñca-kālika* kind, and those who are called by the same names attend to the cleaning of the vessels and keeping the precincts of the shrine free from dirt Thus, the very same words convey occupational difference.

1036 *Āgamaprāmānya*, para 1-10

1037 *Ibid* 18-35

1038 *Ibid.* 36-41, 61-73

Again, those Brahmins are also called *Sāttvatas* and *Bhāgavatas* who are of pure character and devoted to Bhagavān. They perform worship, not for earning their livelihood, but out of their sense of duty 1039

Yāmuna takes up in this connection the *sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa (II 2 42-45) which are interpreted by Śaṅkara and Bhāskara as refuting the validity of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* He prefaces his arguments by drawing attention to the fact that Vyāsa who glorified the paramount validity of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* in the *Mahābhārata* would not have refuted it in the *Brahma-sūtras* which he himself composed under the name of 'Bādarāyaṇa'. He assumes the identity of Vyāsa with Bādarāyana. Therefore, he takes the first two *sūtras* as stating the objection to the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition and treats the next two *sūtras* as evidence in support of its validity.

The first two state the objection. Saṅkarṣaṇa, the soul, cannot rise from Vāsudeva, and Pradyumna, the mind, cannot spring from an agent, Saṅkarṣaṇa. This objection is ruled out by Yāmuna thus Since Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa and others are only *Brahman*, the rise of one from another need not be objected to Mind is, of course, an instrument, but it is not produced from Saṅkarṣaṇa Besides, an instrument like a jar is produced by the agent, the potter, and so the objection cannot stand. A second method of refuting the objection lies in treating Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa and others as knowledge by virtue of their omniscience and because knowledge is had from them. The rise of the *Pāñcarātra* from them cannot be opposed, also because it is known from the *Pāñcarātra* that God has perceptual knowledge of everything, and so the rise of knowledge from them cannot be questioned.1040

1039. *Ibid.* 13 18, 89-91

1040. *Ibid*, para, 95-102.

Yāmuna offers an alternative exposition to the whole argument[1041] The first *sūtra* may mean that valid knowledge cannot rise from the *Pāñcarātra*, because its validity is not itself proved The second *sūtra* means that the *Vedas* are not the compositions of any one, while the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* is one such. The third *sūtra* which answers this objection states that Bhagavān is the source of perfect knowledge, and so the rise of knowledge from the *Pāñcarātra* cannot be questioned. The last *sūtra* declares that the *prima facie* view stands consradicted, because if the motive of God in composing the *Pāñcarātra* becomes questionable, then the same may be said with reference to the *Vedas*, *Smrtis* and *Purāṇās*.

Yāmuna did not probably seek to establish the validity of the *Vaikhānasa*, because objections were raised only against the *Pāñcarātra* which was treated as anti-Vedic The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* is admitted to be purely of *Vedic* origin.

He cites passages from the *Parama-saṃhitā*, *Sanatkumārā-saṁhitā*, *Īśvara-saṁhitā* and *Padmodhbhava-saṁhitā* Some of the passages cited here from the *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā* are not traceable in the printed text

Rāmānuja (1017-1137 A.D) who inherited the tradition of Yāmuna, interprets the *Sūtras* of the *Utpattyasambhavādhikaraṇa* on the lines laid down in the *Āgamaprāmānya* He cites passages from the *Parama*, *Pauṣkara*, and *Sāttvata saṁhitās*.

Rāmānuja makes frequent mention of the six qualities, whenever God is described.[1042] God is to be pleased with acts of worship God enjoys them The Highest Place (*nityavibhūti*) and also the world have facilities for His enjoyment. These are enjoyable objects (*bhogya*) like the objects of sense-organs, instruments (*bhogyopakaraṇa*) like the sense-organs and

1041 *Ibid* 103-115

1042 Introduction of Rāmānuja to *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya*; *Gadyatraya*.

places of enjoyment (*bhogyasthāna*) like the fourteen worlds and the bodies there. Garlands, chowries and others come under *bhogopakaraṇa*. Quadrangles, courtyards and halls become *bhogyasthāna*. These, which are thus classified in the *Lakṣmī-tantra*,[1043] are mentioned by Rāmānuja in the introduction to the *Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya* and *S'araṇāgatigadya* The three kinds of offerings or means of attending upon God are *aupacārika* like incense, music and others, *ābhyavahārika* like *ācamanīya*, delicious preparations etc., and *sāmsparśika* like perfumes. They are mentioned in the *Ahirbudhnya saṁhitā* which prescribes the procedure for daily worship[1044] Rāmānuja refers to them in the *Nitya*, a manual of worship composed by him where he follows the procedure laid down in the text mentioned above. Six *āsanas*[1045] are enjoined to be offered to God at various stages during worship, and these are strictly followed in the *Nitya* The use of the *astra mantra*, *surabhi-mudrā* and *aṣṭāṅga-namaskāra* which are ordained in the *saṁhitās*, are all mentioned in the proper contexts in the *Nitya*.[1046] It is thus found that the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* exerted profound influence on Rāmānuja[1047] Though the system of Vaiṣṇavism represents the happy blending of the concepts of Godhead with the names, Bhagavān, Viṣṇu, Nārāyana and Vāsudeva, the Viśiṣṭādvaita system has been attaching supreme importance to the name, 'Nārāyaṇa', as is clear from the *mūlamantra* and *dvaya*. The name 'Bhagavān' is

1043. *LT* xiv 51

1044 *AhS* xxviii 20b, 21a Cf. *LT* xxxvi. 87-92, which classify them into four kinds—*sāmdṛṣṭika*, *ābhyavahārika*, *sāṁsparśika*, and *abhimānika*.

1045. *AhS*, xxviii ; Cf. *LT*. xxxix.

1046. *Ibid* xxviii 78b, 79a. These lines are quoted by Rāmānuja in the *Nitya*.

1047. Some scholars are critical of the use of the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines by Rāmānuja. (Vide.—S. R Bhatt *Studies in Rāmānuja Vedānta*, pp. 53-55). This is answered in the arguments noted above. It is also ably disproved by J B Carman in his *The Theology of Rāmānuja*. (pp. 173-174). Cf. Eric J. Lott *God and the universe in the Vedāntic Theology of Rāmānuja*, (p. 164.)

often used to refer to God and also along with the name, 'Nārāyaṇa' This is evident from the opening lines in the *S'araṇāgatigadya*, at the end of the *Vaikuṇṭhagadya* and in most passages in the *Nitya.*

Under the influence of Râmānuja's *Nitya*, some of the leading exponents of Viśiṣtādvaita brought out their own manuals called *Nitya*, giving guidelines for leading the daily life in conformity with *śāstraic* injunctions. The ideals of the Vaisnava are set forth here, following the teachings of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*

The *Āhnika-kārikā* in 528 stanzas was composed by Śrīranganārāyaṇārya, also known as Vanglvaṁśeśvara, an immediate disciple of Rāmānuja He expects the Vaiṣṇava to resolve to follow the routine based upon the *pañcakālaprakriyā* as laid down in the *Pāñcarātra Agama* and speaks of the glory of this routine. He treats each part of this routine, indicating how it should be observed *Bhūtaśuddhi* and *nyāsa* are dealt with in detail. Worship of God is called *ijyā* or *yāga*, and before it is actually taken up, mental worship is to be undertaken. This is also called *hṛdyāga.* Along with God, Śrī, Bhū, Nīlā, Sudarśana and other wespons and all the retinue of the Lord must be worshipped in this part of the ritual. The six *āsanas* and the use of *surabhi-mudrā* in *bhojyāsana* are indicated.[1048]

Lost are the *Abhigamanasāra*[1049] which was written at the request of Vatnkapūrna by Śrīvatsāṅkamiśra, also known as Kūrattāzhvān, foremost among the disciples of Rāmānuja, the *Nitya*[1050] of his son, Parāśara Bhaṭṭa; and the *Nitya* of Nañjīyar,[1051] a disciple of Parāśara Bhaṭṭa Opinions on these

1048 xxviii 504b-509a, 110-164a

1049. *PR* p 138, *RTS* II p 443.

1050 *RTS* II pp 306, 443

1051 *Ibid* II pp 443, 444.

matters, which Nārāyanamuni,[1052] a follower of Śrīvatsāṅkamiśra and Parāśara Bhaṭṭa, Kṛṣṇa-muni[1053] and Gṛdhrasaromuni[1054] held, are cited by Vedānta Deśika in his *Pāñcarātrarakṣā*. Not only are their works lost but very little is known about them otherwise

The *Pañcastava* of Śrīvatsāṅkamiśra contains five *stotras*—*Śrīstava*, *Atimānusastava*, *Varadarājastava*, *Sundarabāhustava* and *Vaikunthastava*. Among these, the *Varadarājastava* and *Sundarabāhustava* are intended to sing the glory of God as enshrined at Kāñci and Tirumāliruñcolai (near Madurai) respectively. That the *arcā* form of God is glorified in these two *stotras* cannot be held to be due to the direct influence of the *Āgamas* Even before 1000 A D., this form of God was quite popular, indeed, from ever since the Āzhvārs wrote. They offered their worship to God whose form as icon was not introduced by them but was already there for worship

The *ṣādguṇya* aspect,[1055] the splitting up of the six qualities into three pairs,[1056] one pair shared by each of the three deities, Saṅkarṣana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, and the importance of the doctrine of *prapatti*,[1057] together with its practical aspects, are admirably treated in these five poems Inability to measure the greatness of Śrī is humorously depicted thus :—

देवि त्वन्महिमावधिर्न हरिणा नापि त्वया ज्ञायते
यद्यप्येवमथापि नैव युवयोस्सर्वज्ञता हीयते ।
यन्नास्त्येव तदज्ञतामनुगुणां सर्वज्ञताया विदु-
र्व्योमाम्भोजमिदन्तया किल विदन् भ्रान्तोऽयमित्युच्यते ॥

Śrīstava, 8.

1052. *PR* pp 111, 124, 135, 136 (His work seems to be a gloss on the *Āhnikakārikā* from this reference) : 152, etc.

1053 *PR*. p. 122 The title of the work may be *Sāttvata-nitya*.

1054. *PR*. p 122. The title appears to have been *Nityakarmasaṁgraha*.

1055. *Atimānuṣastava* 6, *Sundarabāhustava* 24, 26, *Varadarājastava* 93.

1056. *Varadarājastava*, 16.

1057. *Ibid* 92.

As it is really immeasurable, it does not detract from omniscience of the Lord and Śrī not to know its measure, as their omniscience cannot know the non-existent sky-lotus.

God may have any one of the five forms, yet the *arcā* forms have a powerful appeal to the devotees, and not to others.

Vide ·

परो वा व्यूहो वा विभव उत वार्चावतरणः
भवन्वान्तर्यामी वरवरद यो यो भवति वै ।
ससत्त्वं सन्नैशान् वरगुणगणान् बिभ्रदखिलान्
भजद्भ्यो भास्येव सततमितरेभ्यस्त्वितरथा ॥

Varadarājastava, 18.

The greatness of the Lord and of Śrī is well brought out by a careful use of the word 'Śrī' in two different senses (as the resort of all and as one who resorts to the Lord)

Vide :

यस्याः कटाक्षणमनुक्षणमीश्वराणा-
मैश्वर्यहेतुरिति सर्वजनीनमेतत् ।
त्वां श्रीरिति त्वदुपसंश्रयणान्निराहु-
स्त्वां च श्रियः श्रियमुदाहुरुदारवचः ॥

Vaikunthastava, 29

Parāśara Bhaṭṭa, the talented son of Śrīvatasāṅkamiśra, is the author of two fine poems, *Śrīraṅgarājastava* and *Śrīguṇa-ratnakośa* The deity at Śrīraṅgam is identified with the four *vyūha* deities, and He is said to be displaying the eminence of the four deities.

Vide:

षाड्गुण्याद्वासुदेवः पर इति स भवान् मुक्तभोग्यो बलाढ्यात्
बोधात्सङ्कर्षणस्त्वं हरसि वितनुषे शास्त्रमैश्वर्यवीर्यात् ।
प्रद्युम्नस्सर्गधर्मौ नयसि च भगवच्छक्तितेजोऽनिरुद्धो
बिभ्राणः पासि तत्त्वं गमयसि तथा व्यूह्य रङ्गाधिराज ॥

Śrīraṅgarājastava, uttaraśataka, 39.

The four deities are to be worshipped as representating the four states of consciousness of waking, dream, deep sleep and transcendence, and the Lord at Śrīraṅgam is identical with them[1058] Viṣṇu's greatness is due to Lakṣmī's, yet the *Vedas* do not make a separate mention of Śrī's greatness, because it gets included within that of her Lord and Lover

Vide :—

स्वरूपं स्वातन्त्र्यं भगवत इदं चन्द्रवदने
त्वदाश्लेषोत्कर्षाद्भवति खलु निष्कर्षसमये ।
त्वमासीमातिः श्रीः कमितुरिदमित्थंत्वविभव-
स्तदन्तर्भावात्त्वां न पृथगभिधत्ते श्रुतिरपि ॥

Śrīguṇaratnakośa, 28

The above-mentioned two writers are thus seen to have been greatly influenced by the *Pāñcarātra* traditions, particularly, the treatment of Śrī's greatness Perhaps, they were directly indebted to Yāmuna's *Catuśślokī*.

Parāśara Bhaṭṭa is the author also of the *Bhagavad-guṇadarpaṇa*, a commentary on the *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma-stotra*. While explaining some names, he cites passages from the *Viṣṇutattva*, *Brahma saṁhitā*, *Sāttvata-saṁhitā* and *Pauṣkara-saṁhitā* Commenting on the name '*Varāroha*', which means one who has attained his own eminent position, the author refers to the *vyūha* doctrine. The *Bhāgavatas* hold that *Para-Brahman* is of three kinds, *para*, *vyūha* and *vibhava* He interprets *vibhava* as appearance or manifestation of the Lord at His will. This is of four kinds, namely, (i) that which is directly assumed like those of Matsya, Kūrma and others, (ii) that in which He inspires specific persons like those of Paraśurāma, Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana and others, (iii) that which arises through His penetrating power as in respect of Purañjaya and others and

1058. *Śrīraṅgarājastava*, *uttaraśataka*, 39.

(iv) that by descent in some individual forms as in *arcā*. Appearance is twofold, namely, *prādurbhāva* and *prādurbhāvāntara*. The latter does not mean another *prādurbhāva*, but what is different from it The difference between the two lies in the former displaying the Lord's personal activity and the latter coming under the control of only a fraction of the Lord's activity For example, Rudra is held to *prādurbhāvāntara*, because he is fully dependent on the Lord's glory. Those who desire to get *mokṣa* are required to worship the *prādurbhāva* kind and not the other type. The author cites passages from the *Sāttvata* and *Pauṣkara saṁhitās*

The four *vyūha* deities and *ṣādguṇya* are referred to, while explaining the names, Mahā'āpas, (twice), Caturvyūha, Atindriya, Mahādyuti, Anirdeśyavapus, Ahassaṁvartaka and Caturmūrti. The functions of the individual deities of the *vyūha* are referred to, while interpreting the names of Sarvavid, Visvaksena and Veda. The name of the Lord as Sāttvatāṁ-pati is explained to have a bearing on the *Sāttvata* system *Prapatti* is referred to while explaining the name, Samnyāsakṛt.

Sudarśana, the discus of the Lord, gets a glorified description in the *Sudarśanaśataka* of Kūranārāyana in which 74 stanzas describe the discus in all its parts and 27 depict the greatness and appearance of the person of Sudarśana The divine couple, Lakṣmī-Nārayana (*Lakṣmīnārāyanākhyaṁ mithunam*) is said to be carefree, entrusting the security of the world to the person Sudarśana [1059] This suggests the influence of the account of the greatness of Sudarśana in *Ahirbhudhnya-saṁhitā*.

Vātsya Varadācārya, also known as Nadadūr Ammāl, a leading exponent of Viśiṣṭādvaita in the 13th century, gave an exposition of the doctrine of *prapatti*, in his *Prapannapārijāta*

1059. *Sudarśana-śataka* of Kūranārāyana, St. 100

comprising of ten sections. At the outset the author proves that this doctrine is authentic and cites the *Laksmi-tantra* and *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā* and quotes passages from the *Visvaksena-samhitā* to support his standpoint With the aid of these passages, the nature of the doctrine is expounded. The same text and *Laksmītantra* are cited in a discussion on who is qualified for this means[1060] Both the learned and the unlearned are qualified for taking up this means.

Vide :

इदं शरणमज्ञानामिदमेव विजानताम् ।
इदं तितीर्षतां पारमिदमानन्त्यमिच्छताम् ॥

LT XVII. 101b-102a.

That a preceptor can take man across worldly life is explained on the authority of the *Jayākhyasamhitā*[1061] A *prapanna* must lead his life rendering service to God. Branding the shoulders with heated conch and discus is the external mark : the internal mark consists in the heart being free from passion, speech devoid of falsehood and the body (physical motion) freed from doing injury to others.

Vide :

रागाद्यपेतं हृदयं वागदुष्टानृतादिना ।
हिंसादिरहितः कायः केशवाराधनं त्रिधम् ॥

Prapannapārijāta V 57

On the authority of Śaunaka, the author recommends worship to the *arcā* form of God[1062] He cites the *Lakṣmī-tantra* and *Viṣvaksena-saṁhitā* to support his exposition of the ethical way of life which a *prapanna* should pursue on the strength of the *Dharma-śāstras* and *Pāñcarātra* texts and which he should

1060. *Prapanna-pārijāta* Section. III.
1061 *Ibid*. Section IV, Cf *JS* Ch. XVI. 120*b*-121.
1062. *Ibid*. V. 39.

avoid.[1063] Finally, the author insists that a *prapanna* should not swerve from the ideals expected of him according to the constituents of *prapatti*. The way of life led according to those principles, will take him to the cherished goal. This text is a magnificent exposition of *prapatti* and is mainly based on the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*.[1064]

The five forms of God are described, one in each stanza, by Vātsya Varadācārya in his hymn of praise, *Paratvādipañcaka*. Among these, Vyūha Vāsudeva is described first Though the Lord is the minutest among the minute and largest among the large, He is of the size of the thumb as *antaryāmin* and visualised by the *yogins*

Sudarśana Sūri, the grandson of the brother of Parāśara Bhaṭṭa, became the disciple of Vātsya Varadācārya and commented on Rāmānuja's *Śrībhāṣya* in his *Śrutaprakāśikā*. In the *Utpattyasambhavādhikarana*, he offers a clear exposition of the Viśiṣṭādvaita point of view The *Mahābhārata* mentions that the *Sāttvata dharma* disappeared several times and was revealed for mankind by Nārāyana This shows that this *dharma* is beginningless like the *Vedas* which too have to be revealed from time to time It was revealed on the mountain Meru, and several sages became its promulgators This shows the sanctity of the place where it was revealed and that the sages had unanimous regard for the system taught to them That King Vasu adopted it is enough evidence to show that eminent persons took to it. The system is helpful for pursuing the four aims in life (*puruṣārthas*), as the *Pāñcarātra* texts claim that it is equal to the four *Vedas* and as it is called *Mahopaniṣat*.

1063 *Ibid*, Sections VI to IX *LT* II. 12.

1064 The author's treatment of the matter is based mostly on the *Lakṣmītantra*, *Viṣvaksenasaṃhitā* and *Viṣṇudharma*. *Tattvaratna* is a *Pañcarātra* text which is mentioned as glorifying Śrī (VI. 6). Other texts are *AhS* SS *SS* *SKS* and *Atrisaṃhitā*.

The *Varāhapurāṇa* has the following passage regarding the *mantras* for worshipping God :

अलाभे वेदमन्त्राणां पञ्चरात्रोदितेन हि ।
मार्गेण मां प्रपद्यन्ते ते मां पश्यन्ति मानवाः ॥

LVI 11

This indicates that the *mantras* enjoined in the *Pāñcarātra* are as valid as those of the *Vedas*, thus declaring that the *Āgama* is on a par with the *Vedas* The authority of the *Vedas* requires corroboration from the *Itihāsas* and the *Purāṇas*. Likewise, the validity of the *Ekāyana śākhā* gets strengthened on the authority of the passages in the *Purāṇās* and *Itihāsas* which glorify the *Sāttvata dharma*. The name 'Bhagavān' is stated to denote only Vāsudeva.

The author shows that the *Pāñcarātra* system has an individuality which validitates it unlike the *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Pāśupata* and other systems. Besides, the *Vedas* contain a number of eulogistic passages (*arthavāda*) which are completely absent in the *Pāñcarātra* texts

While interpreting the *Sūtra*,

विज्ञानादिभावे वा तदप्रतिषेधः । (II-2-41).

Sudarśana Sūri writes that absolute distinction is not meant between the four *vyūha* deities and as such, the rise of one from another cannot be objected to As there is something specific in the effect which is not generally traceable to the cause, even so there is some speciality in the possession of a specific form and ornaments by each of the *vyūha* deities.

An objection is noted to the effect that the *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Pāśupata* and *Pāñcarātra* systems should be considered to have been condemned alike. The author rejects this on the ground that all the four systems cannot be refuted on one and the same ground, as they are mutually opposed. Since Nārāyana is held to be the greatest deity in the *Pāñcarātra*, it is treated as distinct

from the other three systems. Passages from the *Kālottara-samhitā* are cited by the author.

Pillai Lokācārya, a contemprory of Sudarśana Sūri, wrote a number of works, and is the author of the *Prapanna-paritrāna* on the duties and responsibilites of a *prapanna*, and of the *Tattva-traya* on the *tattvas*, the insentient, the sentient and God. God's five forms are mentioned in the latter. The qualities and the functions of each of the *vyūha* deities are explained. The main and subsidiary kinds of *vibhavas* are listed and are shown to be as such at His free will The number of *vibhavas* is stated to be thirtysix Among the five forms, the *arcā* form is perfect, since that alone creates affection (among people for the Lord), is the auspicious form and the refuge for all the worlds and could be enjoyed. This work deserves to be called a collection of *Pāñcarātra-sūtras* 1065

In another work, *Śrivacana-bhūsana*, Pillai Lokācārya states that the Āzhvārs performed the surrender of themselves (*prapatti*) to the *arcā* form of God. He brings out vividly the distinction between the five forms of God The *antaryāmin* form is like the water deep in the earth. *Paratva* is like the water encircling the material universe, the *vyūha* form is like that in the Milky Ocean, the *vibhava* forms are like the water in flooded rivers and the *arcā* ones like that settled in deep ponds Among them the last one is within the reach of the people, while others are not. Those who take to *prapatti* may be ignorant like us, or great in their knowledge like the early preceptors, or those who are devoted to God like the Āzhvārs. *Prapatti* is based on the feeling of one's miserable nature and is an indication of helplessness. It is in fact not a means, but only faith in the grace of God. The Lord is Himself the *upāya* and *upeya* To get His grace, the self requires Śrī to be the divine mediatrix (*purusakāra*) between him and God Śrī intercedes on behalf of the self and pleads

1065. Schrader, p. 27.

that he be forgiven. At the same time she extends her infinite tenderness to the self. The grace which He shows then is spontaneous and does not rise from any cause, nor does it require any personal endeavour on the part of the self Human initiative as a condition for redemption is not required. To adopt it as means would be like a son making a request to his father to protect him God Himself would arrange to get what is good for the self and to avoid what is harmful to him. What the self is required to do is to know himself and not stand in the way of the Lord showering His grace. *Bhakti* and *prapatti*, follow as necessary corollaries from the grace of the Protector.

In the second chapter of his work, the author discusses the nature of *svagata-svīkāra* and *paragata-svīkāra* and the difference between them The former refers to the Lord's accepting the *prapanna* who makes an endeavour for this purpose The latter means that the *prapanna* is accepted by the Lord on account of His own free will. The former never assures the result and the latter is ever friutful Divine grace got through the latter method is like mother's milk, while that through the former is like artificial milk. Besides, conceit and pride would over-power the self while taking to the former and would affect adversely the nature of the self, namely, its abject dependence on the Lord The next two sections discuss the attitude which the self should adopt towards God and the *ācārya*.

In still another work, *Mumukṣuppaḍi*, the author discusses the import of the three *mantras*[1066] studying the meaning and significance of each syllable The place of Śrī, her acting as mediarix and the *caramaśloka* being applicable only to the *vibhava*[1067] get fully explained While upholding the view that God Himself would bless the self, the author states that what is enjoined as *karma* comes under service, as *jñāna* under the

1066. The three *mantras* are *Mūlamantra*, *Dvaya* and *Caramaśloka*.
1067. *Śrīvacanabhūṣaṇa*, 6, 7, 9 ; *Mumukṣuppaḍi*, 110.

knowledge of the self, as *bhakti* under an earnest desire to get at God and as *prapatti* under the correct knowledge of God.[1068]

Among his other works, the *Arthapañcaka* discusses the five subjects which a Vaiṣṇava should know before he seeks God's grace They are the nature of *Brahman*, that of the self, the means of attaining Him, the nature of *mokṣa* and the obstacles that lie in the way of getting it. In the *Tattvaśekhara*, he states that *prapatti* is the means for getting rid of bondage. *Prapatti* is also called *nyāsa*, *tyāga*, *nikṣepa* and *śaraṇāgati* and by other names. Surrendering one's self to *Paramātman* is to be carried out and all are eligible for it. It is a particular kind of knowledge which arises in the self This knowledge includes (i) a request which is formed through stopping the transgression of God's commands, (ii) God being favourably disposed and (iii) meditation (by the self) of God's omnipotence. This knowledge has two phases, one in the form of the object, namely, God's becoming the means without the self's request for it, and the other, the cognition in the form of the resolve (of the self). Those who are qualified for this must have the earnestness to attain the Supreme Being, absence of the desire for anything else and a determined conviction in God's liberality and other qualities. That the self has nothing to call as its own determines this knowledge.

In a work called *Tanidvayo*, the author notes that among the means of getting *moksa*, *prapatti* is the best He cites instances from the *Vedas*, *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas* to justify this unique position of *prapatti* It is defined as knowledge in the form of a request, stating that the self is an abode of offences, has nothing and is helpless. and that He alone must be the means (of *mokṣa*) for him[1069] It is also defined as a request, being the only means for obtaining one's aim which could not be achieved by

1068. *Caramaśloka*, 282 Cf. *Tanidvaya*, p. 223.

1069. *Tanidvaya*, p. 223.

any other means, and this request must be made with m belief.[1070] The six constituents, which are said to belong to *prapatti*, are stated by the author as the traits which a self would get after becoming a *prapanna*.[1071] The Āzhvārs are said to have adopted *prapatti*, when they got the *tattva-jñāna* through God's unconditioned grace, and they did so because they could not brook any delay in attaining Him. A *prapanna* has nothing to do. He has nothing to gain here in this life and so gets *moksa* when he gives up his body. The great Vaisnava *Ācāryas* have preferred *prapatti* as the only means for all, since it destroys all the accumulated sins of the selves, since every one is authorised to adopt it and since *moksa* is assured at the end of the present life. The self has really no power over its own protection, and the protector, namely, God has a right to protect the self

Śrī is considered only as a mediatrix, and not as *upāya* and *upeya* Therefore, she is not equal to Visnu. She is only a self, but as the consort of Viṣṇu, she could not be away from Him at any time This concept appears to go against the *Pāñcarātra* tradition which makes both Śrī and Visnu as *Brahman*. The author cites here a passage from the *Ahirbudhnya-samhitā*[1072]. The *Pāñcarātra* texts declare that Śrī acts at His direction, and so this *Ācārya* has authority for treating Śrī as a subordinate to Visnu. A subordinate cannot have equal status with the master. Visnu is the master, and so Śrī must be only a self ever with Him as His wife. The approach made here by this author differs from the one made by others, The role which Śrī plays as a wife and mother explains this attitude, and the dispute over this between the two Vaiṣṇava sects is meaningless.

Azhagiya Maṇavālaperumāl Nāyanār, the younger brother of Pillai Lokācārya, wrote the *Ācāryahṛdaya* in four sections.

1070. *Ibid.*
1071. *Ibid.*
1072. *AhS.* LI, 61b-62a.

The import of the *Nālāyiradivyaprabandha* (particularly the *Tiruvāymozhi*) is conveyed in this work, and, hence the title. Some decades in the *Tiruvāymozhi* breathe the sense of bridal mysticism. This author chooses to make a classification of these decades according as the forms of the Lord in *Vyūha*, *Vibhava*, *Para*, *Antaryāmin* and *Arcā* attract the bride and make her send Him her message [1073]

The doctrine of *prapatti* is dealt with in the *Parandarahasya* of Jñānādhika, also known as Nainārāccān Pillai, son of Periyavāccān Pillai (C 1300 A D.). Pillai Lokācārya, his younger brother and Nainārāccān Pillai wrote the works mentioned above in Sanskritised Tamil, that is, Tamil with a large admixture of Sankrit words.

The influence of the *Pāñcarātra Agama* is felt in the works of the above-mentioned writers and also in those of later ones The *astāksara mantra* is enjoined by the *Āgamas*. The *Dvādaśākṣara* which is of great importance for the *Vaikhānasa* tradition is not recognised to have as much importance in the Vaisnava tradition Instead, the *dvaya* and *caramaśloka* have received greater attention The *carama śloka*, which forms part of the *Bhagavatdgītā* [1074], has been raised to the level of a *mantra* on the strength of the assurance which God has given there for security and protection to the suffering humanity The path of self-surrender which gets special treatment in the *Lakṣmī tantra* and *Ahirbudhnya-samhitā* has exerted a profound influence on the *Vaisnava* Āzhvārs Therefore, the *dvaya-mantra* acquired a special status for resorting to *prapatti*

Naturally, Pillai Lokācārya's works like the *Tattvatraya*, *Mumuksuppaḍi*, *Śrīvacanabhūsaṇa*, *Yādrcchikappadi*, *Parandapaḍi*, *Śriyahpatippadi*, *Tattvaśekhara*, *Tanidvaya*, *Tanicarama* and

1073. *Acāryahṛdaya*, 156.

1074. *BhG*. XVIII. 66.

Tanipraṇava discuss the nature of the three *rahasyas* (secret doctrines). These works also discuss the nature of God and man for elucidating the full import of these Along with the *Sārasaṅgraha*, *Saṁsāra-sāmrājya*, *Navaratnamālai*, *Navavidha-sambandha*, and others, these enjoin on *prapannas* a way of life that would be in consonance with the esoteric import of these *mantras* Another noteworthy feature is that these are all written in Tamil mixed with Sanskrit for the easy comprehension of one and all

The *Nayadyumaṇi* of Meghanādāri, a contemporary of Pillai Lokācārya, represents Nārāyana with His Śrī, Bhū and Nīlā as the Ultimate Reality. Śri is only a self, but as the beloved wife of Nārāyana, is ever present with Him. She is the mediatrix before Him on behalf of the selves[1075] It is strange to note that this author refers to *bhakti* as the only means of *moksa* and does not treat *prapatti*.[1076]

Vedāntadeśika (1268 1369) made a significant contribution through his *Pāñcarātraraksā* to vindicate the authority of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*. Of the three sections which this work contains, the first discusses the validity of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* at all possible levels and sources, including the *Āgama-prāmānya* of Yāmuna. The conflicting views which the *Saṁhitās* contain about the nature of the four divisions of the *Āgama* (*āgama*, *mantra*, *tantra* and *tantrāntara*) are resolved without injustice to the authority of the texts which discuss them. Actual recriminations found in the *Vaikhānasa* and *Pāñcarātra* texts are shown to be merely apparent and to have no inconsistency whatsoever. His arguments in this context represent an edifice built upon the strong foundations laid by Yāmuna in his *Āgama-prāmāṇya*. The second section is devoted to the daily practices

1075. *Nayadyumani*, pp. 255-7.

1076. *Ibid.* p. 233.

which a Vaiṣṇava is to undertake. These must conform to the *pañcakāla-prakriyā* laid down in the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* The *Saṁhitās* do not give a uniform account of the routine of daily life. There are slight variations in their versions. Besides, the *Āgama* tradition lays stress on the importance of the *dvādaśākṣara mantra*

Vide

चतुर्व्यूहविभागज्ञः पञ्चकालपरायणः ।
द्वादशाक्षरनिष्ठो यस्स वै भागवतोत्तमः ॥

Śāṇḍilya-smṛti, II.

Some *Saṁhitās*[1077] enjoin *Viṣṇugāyatrī* for *japa* in the morning *sandhyā*, *dvādaśākṣara* at midday and *aṣṭākṣara* in the evening. Vedāntadeśika notes that, in principle, the *pañcakāla* concept should be followed and there is no need to give up one's practice which is based on the *Kalpasūtra* of which one is the follower.

Vide ·

एवं द्वादशाक्षरोपादानमपि व्यापकान्तरोपलक्षणम् । स्वसंहितोक्तनिष्ठामात्रेण यथार्हं सर्वेषां पञ्चकालधर्मप्राप्तेः, अतएव हि भाष्यकाराणां शिष्याः प्रशिष्याश्च श्रीमदष्टाक्षरेण समाराधनं प्रपञ्चयन्तः पञ्चकालकल्पनयैव दिनचर्यामुपदिदिशुः ।

PR p. 110

The third section is intended by the author to be an exposition of the *Nitya* of Rāmānuja. With great sagacity, he supplies several links to make the text of the *Nitya* intelligible. The intricate details of the morning routine are analysed and studied in the light of the various texts, especially of the *Pāñcarātra* kind, and conclusions are drawn in the most convincing way which a dispassionate scholar would not fail to appreciate.

1077. E.g., *SKS Ṛsi*, V. 96-98.

Wearing of the *ūrdhvapuṇḍras*, their number, the materials for them, their form, the kinds of rosary seeds to perform *japa*, the nature of the prostrations (*aṣṭāṅga* and *pañcāṅga*) and the lapses from which one should carefully guard oneself are discussed with amazing thoroughness. The variety of flowers to be culled for worshipping God, as well as *yoga* which consists of deep meditation, is explained, following the *Pāñcarātra-saṁhitās*. Among the *Pāñcarātra-saṁhitās* cited by the author, the following are well known: *Pauṣkara*, *Pārameśvara*, *Jayākhya*, *Pādma* and *Sāttvata*. The *Kālottara*, *Hayagrīva*, *Saṅkarṣaṇa*, *Śrīkara* and *Pārameṣṭhya* are among the less known but important ones.

In this *Nyāyapariśuddhi*,[1078] the author discusses the validity of the *Pāñcarātra*. Vedāntadeśika is the earliest writer to take up the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* and discuss its validity.[1079] Those who adopt the *Vaikhanasa-sūtra* exclusively do not deserve condemnation, for the same should be said of others who follow their own *Sūtras*. They have been studying the *Vedas* and following the religious practices sanctioned by their *Kalpa-sūtra* and so are not a whit inferior to other Brahmins. That the *Aśvamedha-parvan* of the *Mahābhārata* declares them to be as valid as the *Pāñcarātra* is sufficient ground for according recognition.

Worth noting in this context are the humorous remarks which the author offers on the mutual accusations in the two *Āgamas*. These recriminatory passages must have been interpolated by those who were intolerant of the greatness of the other system and who were eager to enjoy the slander thrown at the other system as much as eating sugarcane. Alternately, these must be treated as *arthavāda* (eulogistic) in praise of their own system.

1078. *NP*. pp. 167-169.

1079. *Ibid*. pp. 169-170.

Vide :

परस्पराक्षेपवचनानि इक्षुभक्षकृतिचिकीर्षुभिरसहिष्णुभिरु-पक्षिप्तानि वा स्वशास्त्रप्रशंसार्थवादरूपाणि वेति न ततो विरोधः।

NP, p 169.

The material treated in the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* provided a fresh ground for Vedāntadeśika to contribute to the maintenance of the Vaisnava ideals The author wrote for this purpose the *Saccaritra-raksā* in three sections. Apart from the fivefold daily routine on which the *Pāñcarātra* texts concentrate, the person who likes or is expected to worship God is required according to the rules of this *Āgama* to have *pañca-saṁskāra* Among the five sacraments, the marking of the shoulders of the disciple by the preceptor with the heated symbols of conch and discus was assailed by the exponents of other schools of thought on the ground that this amounts to doing injury to another and has no authority to support it While upholding the authoritativeness of the practice, the author prefaces his arguments with proving the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* as valid This sacrament cannot be questioned, because the *Āgama* enjoins it. Then he cites an unusually large number of passages from various Vedic texts, *Dharma-śāstra* texts and *Purānas* to prove the obligatory nature of this sacrament, corroborating his statements by citing passages from this *Āgama*.

Wearing the *ūrdhvapuṇḍra* is a mark of the Vaisnava. The *Pāñcarātra* texts enjoin its wearing. Here, too, Vedic texts, *Dharma śāstras* and *Purānas* are utilised to support this practice, Relevant passages and *Pāñcarātra Āgama* texts are additional evidence given in the second section [1080]

The third section deals with the obligatory sacrament of worship, namely, offering food preparations to God. The

1080. The *Vaikhānasa* texts also enjoin the wearing of the twelve *ūrdhva-puṇḍras*, *KA*, XXXVIII, 24-30.

question of taking *nirmālya*[1081] is discussed and the objection to its acceptance is overruled by citing passages from the *Purāṇas* and *Pāñcarātra* texts. The following *Saṁhitās* are cited in all three sections :—*Pauṣkara*, *Pārameśvara*, *Jayākhya*, *Pādma*, *Sāttvata* *Īśvara*, *Ahirbudhnya*, *Kālottara*, *Sanatkumāra*, *Pārameṣṭhya* and *Pādmodbhava*. The *Atri-saṁhitā* of the Vaikhānasas is also cited

The doctrine of self-surrender, which is treated in the *Pāñcarātra* texts, came to be recognised as an independent means of *mokṣa* in the period of Rāmānuja as a result of the influence of the compositions of the Āzhvārs which gave prominence to this doctrine. Though it is treated in the *Gadyatraya* of Rāmānuja, it took some more time to get expounded on strong grounds Vedāntadeśika took up this matter and treated it in the *Nikṣeparakṣā*.

The prima facie view is first stated, denying a status to this as the means of *mokṣa* The grounds for holding this view are as follows. The nature of *prapatti* cannot be defined, nor does it have the necessary appropriateness. The definition, even if it is given, cannot be precise. There is no Vedic injunction enjoining it. It is possible to deny it the status which is sought to be attributed to it. It does not differ from *bhakti* which has a status as the means of *mokṣa*. It is inefficient to act as such means. Finally, it is not widely known as being the means.

1081. *Nirmālya* is the name given to the food, flower and fruit that has been offered to God,

Vide.

निवेदितं च यद् द्रव्यं पुष्पं फलमथापि वा ।
तन्निर्माल्यमिति प्रोक्तं तत् प्रयत्नेन वर्जयेत् ॥

SKS, *Śiva*, V. 48b-49a.

Cf *SA*. LXIII 106b-108.

The author takes up all these points and refutes them, one by one. Then he shows that *prapatti* could be declared to possess all those features which are sought to be denied. He concludes that the non-acceptance of *prapatti* would go against the tradition which is evidenced in ancient texts like the *Rāmāyaṇa* which contain illustrations of the practice of *prapatti* Passages are cited mostly from the *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā* and *Lakṣmī-tantra* in support of *prapatti* and to some extent from the *Sātyaki-tantra* and *Sāttvata saṁhitā*

All the possible conflicting views on the place of Śrī in Vaiṣṇavism are discussed by the author in his commentary on the *Catuśślokī* In the main, there are two views, according to one of which Śrī is all-pervasive, while according to the other she is atomic in size. There are four subgroups under the former. They are that (i) Śrī is only a self; (ii) she is distinct from the selves and God ; (iii) she has the status of a goddess, but is not the Ultimate Goddess as Nārāyana is the Ultimate God , and (iv) she is actually the Goddess ruling over others. This last-mentioned view is held by the author The second main view holds that Śrī is only a self, though she is the wife of Nārāyaṇa The author criticises others' views and maintains the fourth one under the first main view.

That *prapatti* is a means like *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti* is to be admitted, and in the Kaliyuga Though *bhakti* is not denied, its place is discussed by the author in his commentaries on Rāmānuja's *Gadyatraya* and Yāmuna's *Stotra-ratna* He cites from a number of *Pāñcarātra* texts such as *Sāttvata*, *Parama*, *Saṅkarsaṇo*, *Jayākhya*, *Visvaksena*, *Ahirbudhnya* *Pauskara*, *Īśvara*, *Visṇutattva* and *Sanatkumāra samhitās*, *Lukṣmī-tantra* and others. The name '*Rahasyarakṣā*' given by the author to his commentaries on Yāmuna's *Catuśślokī* and *Stotraratna* and on Rāmānuja's *Gadyatraya* is evidence for his treating these works as having relevance to and forming the basis for the three *mantras* and their esoteric significance.

He discusses the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* in the *Adhikaraṇa-sārāvalī* also Śāṇḍilya's statement that he got enlightenment through the *Pāñcarātra* is intended to prove that it is praiseworthy and is not meant to insult the *Vedas* The Lord condensed the teachings of the *Vedas* and out of compassion for people, He composed the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* Like the classification of *Śruti* and *Smṛti*, the Author made a division of *Vaidika* and *Tāntrika*.[1082] The *Pāñcarātra* is valid like the *Viṣnusmṛti* which upholds Vedic practices [1083] The *gṛhya* cermonials are treated differently by different writers Yet the *Gṛhya-sūtras* are admitted to be based on the *Vedas*. Similarly, the practices which are enjoined on the basis of the *Ekāyana* recension, differ from those enjoined in other *dharma-śāstra* [1084] texts, but yet have their foundations based on Vedic teachings. Varadanātha, son of Vedāntadeśika, wrote the *Adhikaraṇacintāmaṇi*, a commentary on the *Adhikaraṇasārāvalī* On the line,[1085]

श्रौतस्मार्तादिवच्च व्यभजदिह विभुर्वैदिकं तान्त्रिकञ्च,

he cites a stanza of Śrī Viṣṇucitta, the preceptor of Naḍādūr Ammāl, and explains thus *Smṛti* is based on *Śruti* and so is

1082 Vide ·

इष्टा अस्मिन् वेदनिन्देत्यनभिमतमृषेस्सात्वते वैदिकत्वम्
मैवं वैशद्यमूलस्तुतिपरवचने वेदवैरस्य हानेः ।
संगृह्याम्नायसारं प्रणयति भगवांस्तद्धि भक्तानुकम्पी ।
श्रौतस्मार्तादिवच्च व्यभजदिह विभुर्वैदिकं तान्त्रिकं च ॥

Adhikaraṇasārāvalī. 211.

1083. Vide

वेदोपस्कारिविष्णुस्मृतिवदवितथे पञ्चरात्राख्यतन्त्रे ।

Ibid. 216c.

1084 Vide

किं कुर्मः अध्येतॄणामेवं परिमितत्वेनायं दोषः यथोपनिषदाम् ।

Ibid. 216d.

1085 On *Ibid.* 211.

Vedic, and yet there is the division of the sacred literature as *Śruti* and *Smrti* Similarly, the *Āgama* (or *Tantra*) is based on the *Vedas* and so is Vedic, and yet there is the division maintained as Vedic and *Tāntric*

Arguments of a similar kind are restated by Vedāntadeśika in his *Tattvamuktā-kalāpa* and the *Sarvārthasiddhi*, his commentary on it. On *śloka* 122 of the *Buddhisāra*, a section of this work, he remarks that on the evidence of the *Mahābhārata*,[1086] Manu and others admitted the validity of the *Pāñcarātra*, which is adopted as an authority on matters that are undisputed, though not admitted by some others. This does not lead to the declaration of its invalidity The same principle applies to the *Vedas*. The *Ekāyana* recension, which was studied like the *Vedas*, is now extinct, because only a very limited number of persons took to its study as in the case of the *Upanisads*.

Vide ·

तत्त्वं श्रय्यन्तसिद्धं चरणमपि समं गृह्यभेदाद्द्वितीया ।

The author's *Rahasyatrayasāra* is an authentic document of the tradition of *prapatti*, setting forth the views held by the subgroups of Vaisnavism, analysing them and offering his own comments on them. The doctrine of *prapatti* is explained in five chapters Though *prapatti* is held to be a means by itself, it does not mean that *bhakti* ceases to be a means. He argues that *prapatti* should be adopted by every self The *caramaśloka* and *dvaya* are definite evidence to recognise this. The passage that God is the refuge of all and is their well-wisher shows that all are qualified to adopt this. The nature of *prapatti* is characterized by the faith that the Lord will surely protect the self when it makes a request to Him for the purpose. He refers to the views of Pillai Lokācārya on the scope of *arthapañcaka*

1086. *Mbh. Bhīṣma*, LVI. 40.

and criticises them [1087] In the opinion of the author, Rāmānuja explained *prapatti* as a constituent of *bhakti* in the *Śrībhāṣya* and as an independent means in the *Gadyatraya* The unique nature of *prapatti* is dealt with in two chapters. Seven are devoted to explain the way of life which a *prapanna* is required to lead. This work is written in Tamil mixed up with Sanskrit.

Of similar import but smaller in size are several other works of the same author also written in Tamil mixed up with Sanskrit They are each called '*rahasya*', one with the word '*padavī*' added to it, another '*navanīta*' and others '*mātṛkā*', '*sandeśa*', '*ratnāvalī*', and '*culaka*'. All of them deal with the three *mantras* presented in various ways to suit the powers of understanding of people. Among them the *Rahasyasandeśa* has a commentary by the author himself, called *Rahasyasandeśa-vivarana* on *prapatti* The *Rahasyaratnāvalī* with its commentary, *Hṛdaya*, discusses the *arthapañcaka*, *prapatti* and the life of a *prapanna* There is another set of works, each called '*Tattva*', one with the word '*padavī*' added to it, another '*navanīta*' and others '*matṛkā*', '*sandeśa*', '*ratnāvalī*' and '*culaka*'. They discuss the nature of the Ultimate Reality, the self and the world The Ultimate Reality is studied in all its five forms. Among them, the *Tattvatrayaculaka* discusses these topics in greater detail than others While treating of the nature of *Īśvara*, mention is made of the *Viśākhayūpa* the number of *vibhava* forms (as thirtysix) and pure and impure creations.

Among his other works written in Sanskritized Tamil the *Paramatabhaṅga* contains arguments intended to refute the claims of various systems of thought and for defending the Vaiṣṇava system from the attacks of the other schools. Section 21 states

1087. *RTS.* II p 92 where the name of Pillai Lokācārya is not mentioned but a passage from the *Tanidvaya* (P. 223) of the latter is quoted.

the *prima facie* view against the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines. And the next section is devoted to the establishment of the Vaisṇava tradition which includes that of the *Pāñcarātra* system In order to uphold the doctrine of *prapatti*, the author composed the *Abhayapradānasāra* which offers a clear exposition of the doctrine based on a well-known *śloka* in the *Rāmāyaṇa* [1088] The three *rahasyas* are discussed in the *Sārasāra* How a *prapanna* should live here so as to be of service to God and His devotees is treated in the *Pradhānaśataka* and the *Sārasaṅgraha*, Passages are cited from the epics, *Purāṇas*, the compositions of the Āzhvārs and the *Āgama* texts like the *Ahirbudhnya saṁhitā*, *Lukṣmī-tantra*, *Sāttvata-saṁhitā* and others.

The path of *prapatti* and the three *rahasyas* are also treated by the author in the form of verses composed in Tamil The former is dealt with in the *Adaikkalappattu* and works with the word '*curukku*' added to the name of each. The *Arthapañcaka* deals with that topic. The way of wearing the twelve *ūrdhvapuṇḍras*, which are enjoined in the *Āgamas*, is explained in the *Pannirunāmam* The routine of daily life is dealt with in the *Śrīvaiṣṇavadinacarī*

Vedāntadeśika's zeal in preaching Vaisnavism to humanity according to the varying abilities of people. is well reflected in his attempt to produce Sanskrit poems, dramas, and *stotras* incorporating the fundamental doctrines of the system The poem, *Yādavābhyudaya*, depicts in poetic fashion *ṣāḍguṇya* and *vyūha* [1089] and *prapatti* [1090] The drama, *Sankalpasūryodaya*, contains a discussion on the validity of the *Pāñcarātra*.[1091]

1088 *R* VI 18 33b, 34a

1089 *Yādavābhyudaya*, XVII 116 , XX. 79.

1090 *Ibid* X 75

1091. *Sankalpasūryodaya*. II. p. 31.

Among his innumerable *stotras*, the Lord with Śrī is mentioned as the Ultimate Reality,[1092] and source of letters[1093] The *vyūha* and *ṣāḍguṇya* get glorious descriptions[1094] The basis and nature of *prapatti* are explained together with an appeal to God for the security of the self[1095] There is an interesting reference in the *Śaraṇāgatidīpikā* to both the *Āgamic* modes of worship,[1096] where the author does not discriminate one from the other in point of superiority, on which matter the adherents of both the schools have been vying with each other in recrimination[1097] Some of the *ślokas* convey the sense of the *yantras* for the deities concerned[1098] Sudarśana gets an independent hymn, *Sudarśanāṣṭaka*[1099]

Maṇavālamahāmuni, also known as Varavaramuni (1371–1444 A.D), was a great *Ācārya* who worked with a missionary zeal for propagating the doctrines of Vaiṣṇavism. He wrote mostly in Tamil with an admixture of Sanskrit. In this he was prompted by a keen desire to carry the message of the *Ācāryas* to ordinary people who could not be expected to have even a working knowledge of Sanskrit. Yet, the Tamil words of Sanskrit origin are not foreign to the Tamil speaking community. So he chose to adopt the *maṇipravāla* way of writing A study

1092 *Śrīstuti*, 6

1093. *Hayagrīvastotra*, 11.

1094. *Garuḍapañcāśat*, 5. 6; *Abhītistava*, 18 *Śaraṇāgatidīpikā*, 8.

1095. *Nyāsaviṃśati*, *Nyāsadaśaka*, *Nyāsatilaka*.

1096. *Śaraṇagatidīpikā*, 32.

1097. Vide: *SA*. Introduction, p. XXII,

1098. *Hayagrīvastotra* 11, *Gopālaviṃśati* 2, *Sudarśanāṣṭaka* 5, 7.

1099. Another work of the author, *Ṣoḍaśāyudhastotra* invokes protection addressing sixteen weapons of the Lord. Stanza 18 mentions Sudarśana as the source of all the weapons. *SKS* (*Ṛṣirātra* X 21b-32) however mentions all of them as having sprung from the body of the Lord. Perhaps, the *Ahs*, III is followed in the stanza 18 cited above.

of his works reveals that he was well-versed in the advanced texts on Vaisnavism, and to his credit goes the distinction for having used this way of writing and achieved success in his mission In this respect, he was veritably the illustrious follower of his *Ācāryas*

Apart from the rich storehouse of inheritance of Sanskrit and Tamil which he availed himself of, mention must be made of the references made by him to the *Pāñcarātra* sources, which are available from his index to the *Jñānasāra* of Arulālapperumāl Emberumānar, and commentaries on the *Ācāryahṛdaya* of Azhakiyamanavālapperumāl Nāyanār and three principal *rahasyas* of Pillai Lokācārya

The *Pāñcarātra* texts are said to be 108 in number [1100] The *Ahirbudhnya*[1101] and *Visvaksena samhitās*[1102] are mentioned by name and profusely cited.

While commenting on the section on God in the *Tattvatraya*, several passages are cited from the *Visvaksena-samhitā* which is now not available *Para*, *vyūha*, *vibhava*, *arcā* and *antaryāmin* forms are enumerated citing the passages from the texts [1103] While discussing the qualities of God, the *Ahirbdhynasamhitā* is cited to describe the six qualities, the *vyūha* deities and their possession of these in pairs and the responsibility each took up for the well being of people The same text is cited also to explain the derivation of the name 'Śri' How God's power (*śakti*) works for the uplift of man is graphically explained [1104] The path of self-surrender, and its concept and significance are

1100 *Śrīvacanabhūṣanavyākyā* 392

1101. *Ibid*

1102 *Tattvatrayavyākhyāna* 182, 187, 188.

1103 *Ibid.* 182

1104. *Ibid*, 184-188 . *Ācāryahṛdayavyākhyāna* 70.

well brought out with the help of passages from this text[1105] and the *Laksmītantra*[1106]

God's descent, rather rise (*prādurbhāva*), is of two kinds, main and subsidiary The number of *vibhavas* is thirtysix which gets justification from a passage from the *Visvaksena-samhitā*. The author notes this number to be thirty-nine in the *Ahirbudhnyasamhitā* This discrepancy is resolved by treating the descents of Kapila, Dattātreya and Paraśurāma as cases of a subordinate kind Thus, when these are taken out of the list, the number becomes thirtysix[1107]

The citations given here as from the *Sanatkumāra*[1108] and *Jayākhya samhitās*[1109] are not traceable in the texts with these names as available now.

Ranaramānuja (c 1600) cites from the *Kūrma*, *Linga* and other *Puranās*, in his *Bhāvaprakāśikā* on the *Śrutaprakāśikā*, to support the authority of the *Pāñcarātra*.

The *Tattvamārtānda* of Bukkapatnam Srinivāsacārya is a commentary on the *Brahmāsūtras* in the light of Rāmānuja's views In the interpretation of the section '*Utpattyasambhavāt*', '*vijñāna*' and '*brahman*' have grammatical co ordination and so the *sūtra* runs as '*vijñānādibhāve*'[1110] and not '*vāsudevādibhāve*'. The word '*vijñāna*' refers to *jñāna* which is the first quality in the list of *sadgunas* The word '*ādi*' may be taken to stand for the material cause which *Brahman* is. Further, '*vijñāna*' means Vāsudeva and not simply a quality. Objection cannot be taken

1105. *Mumuksupadivyākhyāna* 149.

1106 *Ibid.* 157

1107. *Tattvatrayavyākhyāna* 193

1108. *Jñānasārapramānayojanā* 1, 28,

1109 *Ibid.* 38.

1110. *Brahmasūtra* II, 2, 41.

to the emergence of the self, as there is justification for this in the *Upanisad*[1111] itself. The aphorism, *vipratiṣedhācca*,[1112] must mean "because of the absence of opposition or rejection" The *Pāñcarātra* texts reject the birth of the self and so their validity is not (*vi*) contradicted (*pratisedhāt*) The author shows also that this section cannot be taken to go against the Sāktas. The author must have been influenced by the arguments in the *Siddhāntaratnāvali*[1113] of his grandfather, Venkaṭācārya

Varadā ārya's *Pāñcarātrakantakoddhāra*[1114] silences the objections raised against the validity of the *Āgama*

The *Pāñcarātrarakṣāhṛdaya*[1115] of one Rāmānuja is an epitome of Vedānta Desika's work mentioned in its name The *Āgamapradīpa*[1116] of Sundararāghava places the *Āgama* on stable grounds.

Kapisthalam Deśikācārya, who was living at Tirupati in the early years of this century, discussed the problem of its validity in his *Śārīrakādhikaranaratnamālā* by explaining the *vyūha* doctrine as contained in the *Laksmitantra* and *Sanatkumarasaṃhitā*.

Some works were written on the fivefold division of the day needed to lead the daily routine Among them are the *Pañcakālakriyādīpa*[1117] of Śrīnivāsācārya and *Pañcakālaprakāśikā* of Tirumalai Śrīnivāsācārya Hārīta Veṇkaṭācārya's (c. 1500 A D) *Daśānirnaya* and the *Āhnika* of Gopāladeśika (c. 1750 A D) treat the routine life of a Vaiṣnava

1111 TU I 2 1, 1, *Nārāyaṇa Upanisad* I.

1112 *Brahmasūtra* II, 2 42

1113 Ms No D 5259, Govt. Oriental Ms Library, Madras.

1114. *Ibid*. D 5283

1115 *Ibid*. R 2219.

1116 *Ibid*, R. 606

1117. *Ibid*. D. 5301.

An inquiry into the nature of the mediatrix is undertaken by Nārāyaṇamuni in his *Puruṣakāra-mīmāmsā* which has a commentary written by Śrīśaileśa 1118 Offering daily worship to God is discussed in the *Pratipurusa-bhagavadārādhana-samarthana* 1119 whose author is not known. Sundaravīra-rāghava determines the qualification for offering worship for the sake of others in the *Parārtha-yajanādhikāra nirvāha* 1120 Campakeśācārya's *Taptamudrānkanapramāṇasaṅgraha* 1121 analyses the standpoints about branding the marks of the conch and the discus on the shoulders. *Prapatti*, as a means which every one is required to adopt, is dealt with in the *Nikṣepa-cintāmaṇi* of Gopāladeśika (c. 1730 A D.). This practice is upheld by Śrīnivāsadāsa in the *Nyāsavidyā-pariskrti* 1122 and by Śrīnivāsa in the *Nyāsavidyā-vijaya* 1123

The various aspects of temple worship are dealt with in the *Kriyākairava candrikā* 1124 of Varāhaguru who offers here a brief but accurate account of the *kriyā* and *caryā* aspects of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* The 37 chapters which this work contains represent the tradition as recorded in the *Pādmasaṃhitā*. Of similar nature are the *Pratisthāpradīpa* 1125 of Narasimhavājapeyin and the anonymous *Utsavasaṃgraha*, 1126 *Dīksāvidhāna* 1127 and *Prāyaścitta-saṃgraha*. 1128

1118 *Ibid* R 1705

1119 *Ibid* R 1679

1120 *Ibid* R 1034 (b)

1121 *ibid*. R 21.

1122 *Ibid* R 21 Varadācārya is given as the name of the author in the Adyar Library, TR 233

1123 *Ibid* R 2129 TR 233

1124 The recent edition of this work in Telugu script by Pandit S B Raghumathacaryulu with his commentary is helpful in understanding the text Besides it gives the number of *Tālas*, *Vādyas*, *Mudrās* etc.

1125 *Ibid*. R 3962.

1126 *Ibid* D 5657

1127. *Ibid* R 5255

1128 *Ibid*. D 5733

The *Sudarśanasuradruma* of Anantācārya (known as Anantā-z'vān) of Mysore (c 1850 A D) is an invaluable work on the sacrament of wearing the mark of the heated conch and discus. The author quotes profusely from the Vedic and *Pāñcarātra* texts and *Purāṇas* Śrīraṅgācārya of Purisai who lived at Tirupati at the beginning of this century made a good contribution to this sacrament in his *Bhagavaddharmadarpaṇa* and *Vajrakuthāra.*

Alaśiṅgabhaṭṭa is the author of the *Vajramukuṭavilāsa*,[1129] a *campū* depicting the glory of the Deity at Melkote and also describing how the diamond-set crown came to adorn Him in that shrine. The author states 1838 A D as the date of his birth.

Among minor works on *Pāñcarātra*, the *Sudarśanamīmāṃsā* is said to have been written by Vedācārya, son of Vedavyāsa-bhaṭṭa and grandson of Śrīvatsāṅkamiśra, disciple of Rāmānuja This work argues in favour of the *taptamudrāṅkaṇa* Several writers' names and citations from their works are given here by the author to support his arguments Viṣṇucitta, Nārāyaṇamuni, Vedavyāsabhaṭṭāraka, Yādavaprakāśa and Ānandatīrtha are the writers whose views in support of this sacrament are recorded here. Reference is made to the views of Bhaṭṭa Vācaspati who praised the Lord at Śrīrangam, Gohita Nārāyaṇācārya's *Sadācāragrantha* and Dhanuskayajvan's *Veda-bhāṣya*, all of them being unknown till now. The author mentions Vallāla as his patron. The author refers to a *śloka*[1130] in praise of Rāmānuja and attributes it to his

1129 The works of Alaśingabhatta are available only in manuscript form Vide —S V V O R I MS No 3858

1130 Vallala was a chieftain at Tiruvetra at this period. The stanza is :

तस्मै रामानुजार्याय नमः परमयोगिने ।
यः श्रुतिसूत्राणामन्तर्ज्वरमशीशमत् ॥

Cited on p 20.

preceptor. This *śloka* forms part of the introductory *ślokas* of the *Śrutaprakāśikā* of Sudarśanasūri, son of Vedācarya. As this quotation would suggest the identification of the author with a descendant of Varadācarya, he could not have been the son of Vedavyāsabhaṭṭa.

There is a work with the name of *Sāttvatatantra* in nine chapters. It deals with the theory of creation under the influence of Śakti The divine descents are counted as fortytwo, enumerating them according to each *Manvantara*, the period presided over by each Manu. Devotion is stated to be of three kinds called *Nirguṇa-bhakti*, *Karmaja bhakti* and *Līlā-bhakti*. Vaiṣṇavas are of three kinds To the first belong those who are dear to all. Those who display their liking to others in a relative degree are of the second kind The *Prākṛta* Vaiṣṇavas are of the third kind as they have love for the idols [1131] *Mokṣa* is obtained by reciting the name of Kṛṣṇa The entire work is in the form of a dialogue between Śiva and Nārada There are certain elements like the role of Śakti and divine descents which show the influence of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition or rather the Vaiṣṇava tradition The other features have nothing in common with the *Pañcarātra* system Except for the name, this work has affiliation only to the cult of Kṛṣṇa

There is a *Śāṇḍilyasaṃhitā* of which a part called *Bhakti-khaṇḍa* alone is available. Though it treats *dīkṣā*, *nyāsa* and other topics that generally form part of the *Pāñcarātra* texts, other themes like *bhakti*, *stotras*, *gurubhakti* and practices in the Kali age cover the greater part of this work.

There is also available a *Saṃhitā* [1132] with this name in fragments. Perhaps, Śāṇḍilya, the narrator, is brought in as

1131 IV 74-77.

1132. *Pāñcarātra Nūl Vilakkam*, pp.75,76

the narrator in the *Bhaktikhaṇḍa* mentioned above and offering his name to it

The tenets of the Vaikhānasa system are treated in the *Vaikhānasa-sāra-saṃgraha* of Śrīnivāsabhaṭṭācārya and in the *Vaikhānasa siddhāntaleśā darśa* of Śrī Kṛṣṇabhaṭṭācārya. The *Uttamabrahmavidyāvikāsa* of Sundararājabhaṭṭacārya discusses the concepts of *Brahman*, the means of getting *moksa* and the practice of meditation. Similar is the *Mokṣopāyapradīpikā* of Raghupatibhaṭṭācārya. The *Vaikhānasa dhyāna muktāvalī* of Vainateyabhaṭṭācārya with the commentary of Krsnabhaṭṭācārya, is of a practical kind, as it deals with the postures of the idols and the retinue of God. Installation of images gets treated in the *Pratisthā-vidhi darpaṇa* of Narasiṃhavājapeyin and the *Pratisthānukramaṇikā* of Venkaṭanarasiṃ ācārya. Keśavācārya's *Arcanā-navanīta* and Bharadvāja Narasiṃhācārya's *Arcanātilaka* discuss the procedure of worship.

Śrīnivāsamakhin, son of Timmārya, was a scholar who was a priest in the temple at Tirumalai A master of eight languages, he wrote a commentary on the *Abhijñānaśākuntala* of Kālidāsa and other works of Sanskrit dramatists He also wrote the *Vaikhānasa-mahimāmañjarī*, the *Vaikhānasasūtra-tātparya-cintāmaṇi* on the observances of those who belong to the *Vaikhānasasūtra*, the *Uttamabrahmavidyā* dealing with the means to *moksa* and *Vaiyāsika brahmasūtrā-vyākhyāna*, a commentary on the *Brahmāsūtras* according to the *Vaikhānasa* doctrines One of Sundararāja's disciples, whose name is not known, offered an exposition of the principles of system in his *Vaikhānasa-tattvārtha bodhana*

Azhaśiṅgabhaṭṭa son of Yogānandabhatta, commented upon the *Sattvatā-saṃhitā* in his commentary called *Sāttvata-tantra-bhāṣya* 1133 God tells Samkarṣaṇa that He must be worshipped

1133. MS. No. 3881 in S. V. U. O. R. I. Library.

in three ways and the commentator notes that these ways concern *Para*, *Vyūha* and *Vibhava*[1134] The commentator discusses the kinds of *vibhava* *Arcāvatāra* is shown here to have been included in the *vibhava*[1135] He supports his interpretations by citing passages from the *Laksmītantra* and commentaries on the *Pañcastava* of Śrīvatsāmkamiśra and *Śrīgunaratnakośa* of Parāśarabhatta[1136] A passage from the *Lakṣmītantra* is cited to explain the concept of *Viśākhayūpa*[1137] Besides citing other texts like the *Pārameśvara*, the *Pādma-saṃhitā* is mentioned for a reference to the details regarding *mantras* and their relative positions[1138] The commentator justifies a view of the *cāturātmya* aspect found in the *Laksmītantra* but notes that this is against the view in the *Sāttvata saṃhitā*[1139] *Maṇḍala* is to be considered as the body of God.[1140] To avoid the sin of taking *nirmālya*, the *arcaka* must keep something apart for his and other devotees' use and then offer the offering to Viṣvaksena and throw it into water.[1141] While dealing with initiation, the author gives useful information citing the *Jayākhya* and *Laksmītantra*[1142]

Alaśingabhatta commented upon the *Īśvara-saṃhitā* in his *Sāttvatārtha prakāśikā*[1143] The commentator observes that the *Sāttvata*, *Pauṣkara* and *Jayākhya Saṃhitās* are the *sūtras* for the *Ekāyana-Veda* also called *Mūlaveda*. *Īśvara*, *Pārameśvara* and

1134 *Ibid*. p. 9
1135 *Ibid* pp. 11-14
1136. *Ibid*. pp. 23-26
1137 *Ibid*. pp 58-59
1138 *Ibid*. p 173
1139. *Ibid*. pp 232-233
1140. *Ibid*. p. 286
1141. *Ibid* p. 416
1142. *Ibid* p 493
1143. *MS*. 3851 S. V. U. O. R. Institute, Tirupati.

Lakṣmītantra are their commentaries (*Vṛtti*). Conduct of festivals is treated in the *Īśvara* and *Pārameśvara Saṃhitās*. The *Lakṣmītantra* does not treat this matter. So, the priests in the temple at Kañcī adopt the *Pādma saṃhitā*.[1144] Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Ananta take the place of Saṃkarṣaṇa and others for certain rituals.[1145] At the commencement of the act of worship, Viṣvaksena is to be worshipped according to *Īśvara-saṃhitā* and Gaṇeśa according to *Pārameśvara* and *Jayākhya*.[1146] The commentator identifies certain practices in the text as taken from the passages dealing with them in other texts.[1147] The word '*anuyāga*' which means taking food after completing the worship of God is derived as intended for the self which is atomic in size.[1148]

Vide:

अणुभूतजीवात्मसिध्यर्थत्वाद्यागमनुयाग इत्यपि प्राह्यः ।

He cites Vedāntadeśika[1149] for an explanation of the word '*anuyāga*' and quotes an extract from the *Pauṣkarasaṃhita*[1150] about it. This is to be offered to the deity; what is meant is that it should be offered to the deity in the house. Since the manes (*pitṛs*) are to be offered the food before *anuyāga*, the commentator notes that this interpretation does not suit the context. Hence this word, '*vinivedya*'[1151] must be taken to

1144. *Ibid.* pp. 43-44.

1145. *Ibid.* p. 117

1146. *Ibid.* p. 143

1147. *Ibid.* p. 163

1148. *Ibid.* p. 242

1149. *SR.* p. 87. *vinivedya ca devāya.*

1150. Vide *PauS* XXXI 171, 172.

1151. The commentator supports this interpretation by referring to a passage in the commentary on the *Parameśvarasaṃhitā*. The name of the commentator is not known.

mean the offering which is to be made to God within oneself.[1152] The commentary has useful discussions like the one stated above on topics of crucial value for the tradition.

Svāmī Nāga (or Nāgasvāmin) wrote a commentary called *Tattvapradīpika*[1153] on the *Visnu-samhita*. The commentator quotes the first stanza in the *Yatirajasaptati* of Vedāntadeśika as a *mangalaśloka* The commentary is brief and refers to the relevant *mantras* for application in the proper contexts indicated in the tex [1154] The commentator quotes from the *Sāttvata-saṃhitā*, Murāri's work[1155] and a work called *Nibandhana*. He quotes also from other *Āgamas*[1156] The *Pārameśvāra-saṃhitā* has a commentary called *Vivṛti* by Nṛsimhayajvan[1157] The *Lakṣmītantra*[1158] has a commentary by Kṛṣṇamācārya

In recent years, works came to be written defending the practice of *Taptamudrāṅkana* Among the Vaiṣnavas, the rift regarding *prapatti* adopted as a means gave rise to the writing of small works in support of this and in opposition to it

1152 pp. 242-3

1153. MS No 3859 on SVVORI Tirupati

1154 *Ch* VI.

1155. p 177 Identity of Murāri is not known.

1156. p. 203.

1157. *Ibid*, R 1653

1158 The editor Pandit V Krishnamencārya himself is the commentate of this tert published in the Adyar Library Research Centre.

CHAPTER IX

ĀGAMAS AND TEMPLES

The *Āgamas*, as a whole, are based on the *Vedas*, and their concept of God is derived from them It is but natural that the Supreme Deity should be depicted as formless and beyond comprehension The finite instruments of man and of his powers are totally inadequate to measure God and His powers [1159] God becomes an object of adoration, and so He is represented as an embodiment of lovable qualities and bliss, [1160] thus indicating the result of a development that is only of *Āgamic* origin

This concept of God should naturally be consistent with a way of worship that would be practicable for those who believe in it. Hence the *Āgamas* invariably prescribe *yoga* as the means of *mokṣa*. Control of the mind and concentration of the mental activities, which form part of the *yogic* practice, are essential for offering worship. Therefore, stress is laid quite often on meditation [1161] God, who becomes the object of meditation, is not formless but has forms which represent different levels of realization, beginning from concrete appearance represented by the waking state and passing through the states of dream and deep sleep and culminating in the transcendental one [1162] The Ultimate Reality is therefore called Nārāyaṇa in the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*[1163] and Sadāviṣṇu in the *Vaikhānasa* [1164]

1159 *TU* II 3 8

1160 *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* VI 16.

1161 Cf *LT*. XVI Śrī remarks that this is the most pleasing to her.

1162 *Ibid* XVI 40. Cf. *VK* pp 519-20

1163 *SS*. IV 7-20, *LT* XI 9-18.

1164 *SKS* Brahma VI 138-40 Note the remark of S N Das Gupta: *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. V, P. 172.

The *Srīpraśnasaṃhitā* makes an explicit reference to the later rise of offering worship to the *arcā* form of God [1165] The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* also classifies the act of worship as of two kinds, namely, *Amūrtārcana* and *Samūrtārcana* [1166] The name of the former shows clearly that though worship (*arcana*) is undertaken, it is not with reference to the concrete form of God It is held that the performance of *homa* in the fire constitutes *Amūrtārcana* According to this *Āgama*, this is to be done on the lines prescribed in the *Vaikhānasa Kalpasūtras* [1167]

Both the *Āgamas* have developed mostly with reference to the worship of God in concrete form The *arcā* form is required to be created out of specific materials [1168] Since Visnu with Śrī is considered to be the Ultimate Reality, the image of God as Varāha paved the way for the earth to be raised to the level of a goddess called Bhūdevī, identified with Pusti She too was given a status in the form of an idol to occupy a place to the left of Visnu.[1169] Nīlā came to occupy a place under the influence of the stories of Krsna. While treating Visnu as the Supreme God, it became necessary to give other gods a due place, and so they are treated as forming part of His retinue. The idols so created for the principal deity, particularly Viṣnu and His consorts and some others as well, such as Visvaksena, Hanumān, the *Vibhava* deities and others, were required to be only one for each, but not more.

The worship of God can also be done in water, *kūrca* (a bundle of grass used as a seat) and an idol. The tradition of

1165 *ŚprS* IV 5, 6

1166 *SA* I 28b-29a

1167 *VK* pp 3, 480

1168 *SKS Brahma,* VII 1 2, *SA* LIII 3. *PāS* III 32 for greater detail

1169 *KA* V 99a, *PaS.* III, 19 25

the *Agamas* is to treat the first one as low, the second as of the middle kind and the last as the best[1170] The idol is called *bera*[1171] which means 'body' The *Āgamas* use this word quite often to refer to the idol. Worship of the Lord in the idol is said to please the eyes, mind and heart It produces devotion for Him in people who worship it. Hari is pleased and becomes accessible to His devotees.

Vide:

चक्षुषः प्रीतिकरणान्मनसो हृदयस्य च ।
प्रीत्या सञ्जायते भक्तिर्भक्तस्य सुलभो हरिः ॥
KA. I. 13.

1170. *KA*. I 13b, *SA* 31 53b, 54

1171 This word does not occur in the Sanskrit language But it is found as forming part of other words e g, the name of *Kubera*, the lord of wealth, who is said to have a bad (deformed) body Vide

कुत्सायां क्वितिशब्दोऽयं शरीरं बेरमुच्यते ।

Vāyupurāna, LXX-39a Some commentators take this word to be derived from the root '*Kumb*' meaning to conceal' with the suffix, '*erac*' Kubera is said to conceal his wealth and keep it away from one and all Vide Bhānujidīkṣita on *Nāmalingānuśāsana*, I 1 68a Cf *Vācaspatya* pp 2104, 4969; *Śabdakalpadruma*, II p 144.

This interpretation is not acceptable, for it does not explain how the word '*bera*' has come into being The origin of this word is still mysterious.

The *Āgamas* use the words '*bera*', '*arcā*', '*pratimā*', '*bimba*' and *mūrti*' in the sense of the idol

Bera, *JK*, LIV, *VK* p 72, *KA* III 21a, *SA* XVIII 1, *ViSS* X 17, *SKS Brahma* VI 46, 49; *IS* IV 64a

Arcā *VISS* X 72, *SKS Śiva* I 82

Pratimā *SA* XXII 24b, *SS* XXIV 15b, *JS* XX-14a, *PARS* XVIII. 23a, *VIS* III 12, *SKS Brahma*, VI 54b

JS XX-1a, *LT* L 106b, *SS* XXV 15b, *PARS* XXIII. 1 2, 3, *VISS* V 86, *PARS* VI. 21a

Mūrti *SA* IV 28a, *KA* XVII 1a, *VK* p 244, *JS* XII 20b, *SKS*. *Śiva*, VIII 111, *LT* XL 54a, *AHS* XXXV. 58a, *VISS*. XXII 64, *PARS* III. 5, *IS* VI 89b

Five *beras*, according to the *Vaikhānasa* system, called *Dhruva*, *Kautuka*, *Snapana*, *Utsava* and *Bali*, are required in temples. They are to be made out of various materials in specific sizes proportionate to one another[1172] Some authorities hold the *Snapana* and *Kautuka* to be of little importance By worshipping the *Dhruvabera* one gets rewards hereafter and the *Utsavabera* gives rewards here itself[1173]

The *Vaikhānasa* texts seek to classify the forms of God in a different way also. They are mobile (*cala*) and immobile (*acala*)[1174] The former is required to depend upon another which is taken as represented by the *kautuka-bera*[1175] This is to be served with devotion upon which devotion sprouts out in the devotee. People become prosperous by worshipping this form. The other form is also called *niskala*[1176] It does not depend upon a concrete form It is represented by the *Dhruvabera*. This form is mainly intended for the worship of the recluses[1177]

The need to have an image which can never be disturbed from its position accounts for the *Mūlabera* or the *Dhruvabera* But the grace of God is not restricted to be received only by the *arcaka* or the devotees who visit the temple. There are persons who may be ill and can not move out of their homes For their benefit, an image is required to be taken in procession through the streets This accounts for another image whose size must be in some prescribed proportion to that of *Dhruvabera* It is called the *Utsavabera* The occasions for taking this image around the locality must be determined. Hence certain days or periods in the year are particularised when festivals can be celebrated with pomp Again, there is

1172 *VK* p 219

1173 *KA* IX 14-54

1174 *SA* XLIII 52.

1175 *VK* pp 491-92

1176 *VK* pp 91-2

the need to offer a ceremonial bath every day to God. This cannot be done without much inconvenience So an image called the *Snapanabera* is intended for the purpose. The *Dhruva* and *Utsava beras* have ablutions generally once a week on a fixed day or on specific occasions. The *Snapanabera* is also called *Tīrthabera* and is taken for immersion in the sacred waters of a tank or river or sea when the annual or any other festival concludes, the occasion being called *avabrtha* An image called *Kautukabera* or *Karmabera* is installed for which offerings of flowers, (*arcana*) are made daily. Lastly, it is necessary to have a *Balibera* which is to be taken round for making offerings at fixed places in the temple.

The *Vaikhānasa* kind of worship, at it is now in practice, does not keep the distinction between the *Utsava* and *Kautuka beras* The offerings (*arcana*) are made direct to the *Mūlabera* and *Kautukabera* 1177

The *Pāñcarātra* mode of worship has a *Śayanabera*, used to show God as taking rest at night at the end of the routine of daily worship. The *Vaikhānasa* mode permits the *Snapana* or *Bali bera* to be used for this purpose. Some *Pāñcarātra* texts speak of a *Tīrthabera* as the sixth idol used on specific occasions.

It is hard to understand how and why the present practice arose of keeping only four or three *beras* in the temples including the major ones. It is found that one of the *beras* like the *Snapana* is used to serve the purposes of another which was perhaps not made or lost in course of time There seems to be no strong justification for keeping both the *Tīrtha* and *Snapana beras* as suggested in certain texts The reference in the

1177 Vide

ध्रुवकौतुकसंयुक्तमर्चनम् ।

JK p. 77.

Viṣvaksena-saṁhitā[1178] to *Karma*, *Nitya* and *Taruṇālaya* is also vague, unless some kind of justification is to be offered for keeping them

There are rules which prescribe the size of each *bera*, the metals out of which they are to be made and the methods and times of worship Among them, the *Dhruvabera* is also called the *Mūlabera*, as it represents figuratively the root out of which a tree is evolved, in which the *Utsava-bera* represents the flower and the other three the leaves. The utmost significance is therefore given to the installation of the *Dhruva-bera* There are certain postures like *Sthiti*, *Āsana*, *Śayana* and others for this[1179] Specific ornaments and weapons are required to adorn these idols

In the making of these idols, the materials will have to be examined and selected, so as to bring prosperity for the maker, the priest and the people of the locality also Artistic form is to be achieved while making the image. God, however, takes the form which the maker or the priest or the devotee eagerly prays to God to take up

Vide ·

बिम्बाकृत्यात्मने बिम्बे समागत्यावतिष्ठते ।

SS VI. 22

सुरूपां प्रतिमां विष्णोः प्रसन्नवदनेक्षणां ।
कृत्वात्मनः प्रीतिकरीं सुवर्णरजतादिभिः ॥

तामर्चयेत्तां प्रणमेत्तां यजेत्तां विचिन्तयेत् ।
विशत्यपास्तदोषस्तु तामेव ब्रह्मरूपिणीम् ॥

Viṣṇudharma, CVI. 16.

1178 *VisS* X 82-83

1179 *Yānārūḍha*, that is, 'stationed in a vehicle' is one of the postures. Vide *AniruddhaS* XII 1, *VK*. p. 92.

The idols are to be installed in specific places with elaborate preparations of materials using the particular *mantras* enjoined in the *Āgama* texts for each deity and for each *bera*. The kind of grains to be used for preparing the food offerings, the quantity of the ingredients, the kind of flowers to be culled for offering to God, the materials to be brought for each pitcher (*kalaśa*) whose number varies according to the occasions and which are used for ablution (*snapana*) of the idol and the number of offerings to be made to suit the occasions are all dealt with in these texts.

To house the idols, the *sanctum sanctorum* is to be built with enclosures of varying number, quadrangles, courtyards and halls with towers with specified numbers of storeys. Rules are laid down differently in different texts for installing the gods who form the retinue of the principal deity in particular enclosures.

Worship done to the idol is stated in the *Vaikhānasa*[1180] texts to be of two kinds, *Śāntika* and *Pauṣṭika*, the former bringing about the removal of evils of all people, while the latter is conducive to their welfare.

Worship of God is called *yajña* which suggests that it is *Vedic* in character. It is of two kinds. worship in the temple and worship at home. Worship in the temple is extolled to be the best. It will not stop, even if the priest who performs it passes away. It is conducive to the welfare and prosperity of the people of the locality. This classification is also called

1180. *KA* 14 205b, *Pāñcarātra* also has them. Vide *JS.* XIV 76b.

svārtha and *parārtha* [1181] The former corresponds to worship done in the house and the latter to that done in the temple.

The *Vaikhānasa* text called *Vāsādhikāra* offers another classification into pure and mixed The former is that which is done in the house by one who observes all the forty sacraments prescribed in the *Vaikhānasa-kalpasūtras.* The idol to be worshipped must be installed in the house and the worshipper must perform *homa* daily in the fire, and he should not perform worship in the temple. The worship done in the temple for others' sake, following strictly the procedure laid down in the *Āgamas*, is of the mixed kind

As to who is qualified to perform worship, there is difference of opinion between the *Pāñcarātra* and *Vaikhānasa Āgamas* The former prescribes the qualification for all people without distinction of caste and sex It is based only on two grounds, namely, *pañca-samskāra* and specific initiation One becomes eligible for the latter only after getting qualified by the former. Some of the texts actually mention that women are eligible for initiation.[1182] All are qualified only for offering worship in the

1181 This classification is not actually stated in the *Vaikhānasa* texts though it is implied Cf *KA* ch 38, *SA* ch 81 The *Pāñcarātra* has specific references Vide

स्वार्थं गृहार्चनं प्रोक्तमालयेषु परार्थकम् ।

Ānanda-samhitā, III 5

Cf —

परार्थः सूर्यसदृशः स्वार्थस्तु गृहदीपवत् ।
उत्कृष्टः परशब्दोऽयमर्थो मोक्षादिलक्षणः ॥

TS XXI 508,

1182 That *pañcasamskāra* is quite essential to do service to God is explicitly conveyed in *PārS* xv 959-973 The kinds of initiation which vary with the individuals are treated in *JS* xv 4-6, xvi 34-61a, xvii, *PārS* viii 8 10, *IS* xxi, *SS* xix Cf *PārS.* iv. 1 8 See *JS.* ch. 16, *PauS* xxx 136b-189 Also

स्त्रिय. शूद्रश्चानुलोमाः कल्याणगुणसंयुताः ।
यदि तानि शिष्यत्वे गृह्णीयात् कृपया गुरु. ॥

Viśvāmitra S III 27.

house, while Brahmins alone are eligible to worship the deity in the temple [1183] In some texts, it is stated that only those who are descendants of Kāśyapa, Aupagāyana, Bharadvāja, Mauñjyāyana and Śāndilya have the primary qualification,[1184] while others have the qualification in the secondary sense.

According to the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*, only those who, by birth, belong to the *Vaikhānasa sūtra*, are eligible to worship in temples Investiture with the sacred thread (*upanayana*) is the only qualification, which only Brahmins can have Others are forbidden from having this right, whatever be their caste or sex If such persons touch the idol, even by accident, expiatory rites have to be performed [1185]

The person, who is to attend to worship, is called '*ācārya*' in this system Besides being a follower of the *Vaikhānasa-sūtra*, he must be a householder with a wife and children Study of the *Vedas* and training in the performance of *Srauta* rites and expiatory rites, diligence in discharging his duties and, above all, abiding devotion to Viṣṇu, mark him as competent for the work in the temple In addition to attending to his work in the temple, he must also offer worship to God in his house [1186]

The *Pāñcarātra* system prescribes certain qualifications. The person, who is to offer worship to God in the temple, is

1183 Vide

परार्थयजनं कुर्युस्त्रिरा मुख्यानुकल्पयो· ।

PāS caryā I. 8

1184 S'āndilya and the other four sages who received the *Pāñcarātra* training from him have primary authority to do worship *IS* xxi 511 , *PāS* iv 3b, 4a , *SprS* xxiv 144-146

1185 *SA* xxvii 1 3, 10 15, lxxviii, *JK* xxi 511, *VK*. xxxvii pp 467-9, *KA* xxvii

1186. *SA*. xxvii 10-15 , *KA* I. 22b-25 , *VK* pp 5-6

here also called '*ācārya*'. He must be competent in the practice of *mantras*, following the tradition both in theory and practice He must be in a position to offer clarifications on the issues raised by pupils without referring to the texts Actuated by selflessness, he offers training and guidance to the pupils. If need be, he gives assistance even to those who are not his students He never deceives any one, not even the ignorant[1187] Adequate physical and mental strength[1188] is expected in him. He must be only a Brahmin He must avoid loose talk and lead a virtuous life[1189] He may be a *brahmacārin*, *gṛhastha* or *vānaprastha*,[1190] but never a *sannyāsin*[1191] He may be a *vaṭu* (less than sixteen years old),[1192] a young man, of middle age or old.

The *Pāñcarātra Āgama* speaks also of the qualifications for the pupils who are said be of four kinds,[1193] *Samayin*, *Putraka*, *Sādhaka* and *Ācārya*. *Samayins* get merely initiated, but do not learn the doctrines of the system and so are not fit to worship God[1194] Those who become sons, as it were, to those who initiate them, are of the second kind.[1195] *Sādhakas* are those

1187 *JS* XVIII 46-62

1188 *LT* XXI 30b-36, *Puruṣottama-S* II 3-7

1189 *AhS*. XX 1-7, *SS* VII 22-23

1190 *SKS Indra*, IX

1191 *PāS* III 24 1-25a

1192 Vide

वर्षात् षोडशकादर्वाक् बटुरित्यभिधीयते ।

PāS III. 24. 15b.

1193 *SKS Brahma*,V-118.

1194 *Ibid* ,, 120

1195 *Ibid* ,, 121.

ASV—45

who understand the nature of the system and become devoted to offer worship to God.[1196] *Ācāryas* have the competence to expound the *mantras* and the texts and could conduct the sacraments to the pupils[1197] The *Ācārya*, who is mentioned here, is a pupil at first and then becomes a preceptor[1198] All these are fit to get initiation.

The pupil must have amiable qualities, be able to receive and retain what is taught to him and live according to the tradition with faith in God[1199] Initiation is open to any caste and even women are eligible, if they get their husbands' permission[1200]

The process of initiation gets an elaborate treatment. Several tests are to be conducted to find out whether the pupil will remain true to what he is taught He must have abiding faith in the *Sāttvata* system. The period of test is one year[1201]

Initiation is called *Dīkṣā*, which word is explained as denoting that which cuts away all miseries and *karma* and reveals

1196 *SKS Brahma*, V 122

1197 *Ibid* ,, 124 A code of conduct for the last two is laid down here *Ibid* 126-135 For an elaborate account, see *JS* xvii cf *PauS* I 14-21

1198 *LT* xli 8 This classification is stated to have been treated elaborately elsewhere It is not cloar whether this is a reference to *JS*, or *SKA* or any other text

1199 *AhS* xx, 8-10, *SKS Brahma*, V. 130-135.

1200. *LT* xxi, 37-41, *JS* vii, 25-27

1201. *AhS*. xx. 11b-14a.

reality in full.[1202] It destroys all impurities and brings to the pupil supreme bliss.[1203]

Initiation is twofold according to the economic condition of the pupil A well-to-do candidate gets it done on an elaborate scale. For one who is not well off, *homa* is done in the fire with seeds of sesamum, for the penniless oral instruction [1204] is enough. No one who makes a request for it may be denied.[1205] There is another classification into ordinary and special *Mantras* are merely used in the former kind which admits of three further subdivisions, condensed, normal and elaborate [1206] The special kind is fivefold The *Samayins* and youngsters whose hearts are set on Visnu get the first kind. The second is open to maidens and *Putrakas*. The third is prescribed for the *Sādhakas* who wish to obtain *moksa*. The *Ācāryas* must adopt the fourth to attain *sāyujya*. Women are eligible for the last kind [1207]

1202 The initial letter '*dī*' in the word is derived from the root '*do*', meaning to cut

1203 Vide

यद् द्यति क्लेशकर्मादीनी क्षयत्यखिलं पदम् ।
क्षपयित्वा मलं सर्वं ददाति च पर पदम् ।
दीक्षेति तेन तत्त्वज्ञैर्वर्ण्यते वेदपारगैः ॥

LT LI 5b 6

दीयन्ते सिद्धयः सर्वाः क्षीयन्ते ग्रन्थयोऽप्यतः ।
दीक्षात्वमेवं दीक्षायाः धर्माधर्मह्रदात्मनः ॥

VS x 2.

द्यति संसारमखिलं तेन दीक्षेति भण्यते ।

ŚPRŚ. xvi 19a.

1204 *JS* xvi 4b-6

1205 *Ibid.* 7-10a.

1206 *Ibid* 54-55

1207 *Ibid.* 58b-61a.

The pupil must be pure and free from temptations. A *samhāranyāsa* is done by the preceptor on the body of the pupil in order to get rid of the impurities there belonging to *prakrti*. The body then becomes pure when the teacher does *srstinyāsa* there. This is followed by *sthitinyāsa* when the *mantra* is taught which does not leave the pupil on any account[1208] The preceptor does this at first on his body so as to make himself *mantramaya* and then he does this on the body of the pupil.[1209]

The *mantra* is then taught to the pupil which he is to practise with faith and diligence[1210] To do this, he has to undertake *japa*, *homa*, *tarpaṇa*, *abhiṣeka* and *viprabhojana*. All these are collectively called *Puraścarana*.[1211]

There is yet another division of initiation as gross, subtle, and absolute All the three are called *mantradīkṣā*[1212] for which the pupil must have got himself qualified in the practice of *mantras*. Thereupon, the adept will give initiation in the principles (*tattva*). The entire process is highly intricate to understand[1213] The pupil will have to occupy the *maṇḍalas*, especially, the *cakrābja-mandala*. At the end, he gets the ritualistic ablution which gets a very elaborate description[1214]

1208. *SKS Brahma*, ix 12-14a

1209 *AhS* xx 26b-41a

1210 *Ibid* xx

1211 Vide

जपहोमौ तर्पणं चाभिषेको विप्रभोजनम् ।
पञ्चाङ्गोपासनं लोके पुरश्चरणमुच्यते ॥

Mantrakaumudi cited in *Ācārendu*, p 122

For a rigorous practice of these, see *LT*. xxiv 35-44 , LII.

1212. *LT* xli 32

1213. *Ibid*. XLI 9-66 ; *JS*. XLI XVIII,

1214. *JS* XVIII.

It is thus found that all are qualified for initiation. In this context, it is worth considering what the word '*kṛtalakṣana*' means in a passage already cited from the *Mahābhārata*.[1215] It means those who have the 'mark' This 'mark' cannot be getting initiated, but something else by which one getting it becomes eligible to do worship to God This mark may be that which is made on the shoulder blades of the pupil by the teacher with the heated symbols of the conch and discus. It may be the *ūrdhvapuṇdra*. Anyway, both these show the wearer of them as a *Vaiṣṇava* Ancient texts [1216] declare these as essential for doing worship to God

Some of the later *Saṃhitās* [1217] mention the sacrament of *pañcasaṃskāra* as included under initiation, calling it a *dīkṣā*. Ancient texts, however, do not refer to this. Though it is necessary to qualify a person for worshipping God, it is not initiation, nor can it be considered a qualification for a priest to offer worship in a temple.[1218]

The *ācārya* is one of the four kinds of adepts for *dīkṣā* He is virtually the director for giving guidance to those who participate in the installation ceremonies Thus, he is not an ordinary priest The disciples, assistants and *arcakas* work under his direction He must therefore be well-versed in the theory and practice of the Āgamic works including that relating to the building of the temples.

1215 Vide ·

ब्राह्मणैः क्षत्रियैर्वैश्यैः शूद्रैश्च कृतलक्षणैः ।
अर्चनीयश्च सेव्यश्च नित्ययुक्तैः स्वकर्मसु ॥

Bhīṣma. LXVI 39.

1216. Cf *SR* I & II.

1217 *IS* XXI 283b-326, *SprS* XVI 109-137. *Parāśarasaṁhitā*, IV 148. *Viṣṇutilaka*. IV 188-189.

1218. *PāS*, III. I 17-19; *SA*. XXVII. *VK* p. 6.

The act of worship is conceived in the *Āgamas* as *yāga* [1219] The *Pāñcarātra* has specific rules laid down for this. The *Vaikhānasa* follows the rules laid down in the *Vaikhānasakalpasūtras*. The *cakrābjamandala* is to be used for the performance of the rituals, which are classified into seven kinds:—*yāga*, *stoma*, *mahāyāga*, *adhvara*, *sava*, *kratu* and *haristoma* What precedes in this order is of less importance than what follows it. These are to be performed respectively by the *Samayin*, *Dīksita*, *Cakravartin*, *Abhisikta*, *Guru*, *Ācārya* and *Bhagavān* [1220]

The *Āgamas* are concerned also with the well-being of the people. This is evidenced from the directions contained in them for laying down the roads in the villages where the temples are to be constructed.[1221] The *Aparājitaprccha*, *Śilparatna*, *Kāśyapa-śilpasūtra*, *Tantra-samuccaya*, and many others treat, among other topics, temple-building with architectural details and other allied topics However, what they contain do not accord well with the Āgamic treatment in all details Several methods could have been utilised by the *Āgama* texts to serve their purposes They are not actually concerned with the details of construction, materials and measurement They are interested primarily in maintaining the ritualistic aspect in the building programmes Architectural details are therefore not fully available in the texts

An individual or a group of persons or a rich landlord or a king is referred to as *yajamāna* or *bhakta* if he takes the initiative

1219 Vide

मानसेन तु यागेन ततो विष्णुं समर्चयेत् ॥

JS. XII 1b

1220 *SKS Indra*, IV. Cf *NāradīyaS* X 16-20, XI, 17-20

1221 *PauS*. II, III, *PāS* III. 1-7, *KapiñjalaS*, VI-IX, *KA*. II, *ŚA*. II-VI, *VK*. II-VI.

by providing the means for the building of a temple. Any one cannot become a *yajamāna*.[1222]

Under the director, artisans have to work. They are referred to by the words, '*rathakāra*', '*śilpin*', '*sthapati*' and '*takṣaka*'. Among them, the *śilpin* works as a liaison agent between the director or the *ācārya* and the *yajamāna*. The qualifications of these are stated in texts like *Śilparatna*.[1223]

Mantras play a significant role in the *Āgamas* A *mantra* is sound with which one associates oneself in the belief that it would protect thim. It protects from all dangers one who knows its secret [1224] Since the *mantra* emanates from sound, and sound arises from *Brahman*, the *mantra* should denote God alone. The pupil who receives the *mantra* from the preceptor should practise the ritual performance called *puraścarana* This is to be done on the bank of a great river, or in a temple or a forest or a place which is out of public sight Full effects cannot be achieved unless the aspirant repeats the *mantra* a specific number of times [1225]

There are many kinds of *mantras* For instance, *tāraka* is a *mantra* which saves the devotee from worldly suffering. It is with reference to a male deity. But it is called *tārikā* when it refers to a female deity. There are others such as *anutāra*, *anutārikā*,

1222 *PuS* III 15b-17a

1223 Vide —Śrīkumāra's, *Śilparatna*, I 29-41

1124 Vide

मननान्मुनिशार्दूल त्राणं कुर्वन्ति वै यतः ।
ददते पद्मात्मीऽयं तस्मान्मन्त्रः प्रकीर्तितः॥

JS XIII-203 *PārS* VI-100, *IS*. III-79.

1125 It must be repeated four lakhs of times. Vide —*Mahodadhi* quoted in the *Ācārendu*, p. 134.

anga and *upāngas* *Praṇava*, *vyāhrtis*, *gāyatrī*, *tāra* (*tārika*) and *anutāra* (*anutārika*) are held to be five *Vaiṣṇava mantras* [1226]

The *Pāñcarātra Āgama* adopts Vedic and *Tāntrika mantras* [1227] The *Vaikhānasa* enjoins the use of those taken from the *Vedas* only The name or names of the deities with appropriate epithets are also used during worship [1228] These are also treated at times as *mantras* [1229] *Mantras* are classified as *Saumya*, *Āgneya* and *Saumyāgneya* [1230] The letters, which constitute them, have their own presiding deities.[1231] Another way of classifying them is as *Vaidika*, *Tāntrika* and *Vaidika-tāntrika* [1232] The second kind is meant for those who get initiated according to the *Pāñcarātra* system [1233] Specific *mantras* are enjoined with reference to the various deities [1234]

The ground or site where the temple is to be erected, requires to be tested from the colour of the mud and availability

1226 They are *Pranava*. *Ṣaḍakṣara*, *Aṣṭākṣara*, *Dvādaśākṣara* and *Jitante Mantra*

1227 The list of Vedic *mantras* is contained in *LT* translation, p 391, *ISS* pp 441-2, *ViśvāmitraS* pp 297-301, *ŚprS* LVIII-LXIV, *LT* translation pp 392-398, *Kriyākairavacandrikā*, pp 326-362

1228 *LT* XXXIII, *VK* pp 296-299, *KA* pp 187-188

1229 *KA* XV 28, 29, *VK* p 221, 230-232,

Vide

यस्य देवस्य स्वको मन्त्रो न विद्यते तस्य नाममन्त्रं
वैष्णवान्तं जुहोति ।

VK p 232

1230 *SKS Śivā*, II 1

1231. *LT* XX, *AhS* XVII 4-37

1232 *SKS Ṛṣi* V 37-40a

1233 *Ibid* V 39a, 40a, IX 10a, cf *VS*. XXIX 46-47a

1234. *LT*. Translation, pp. 392-398, *VK*. pp. 256-258

of water.[1235] Some offerings are to be made before this selection is made.[1236] A procession is also required to be held according to some texts.[1237] The *Vāstupuruṣa* is also to be propitiated.[1238]

Plans for the formation of villages are found in the *Āgamas*.[1239] The village or town should be the prototype of the temple.[1240] Preliminary ceremonies called *Garbhanyāsa* are to be observed at the site.[1241] The temple of Viṣṇu must be erected at the centre of the locality.[1242] Other deities should have their due place.[1243] The qualifications of the *arcakas*

1235 *PaS* III 1 19a-39, *KapiñjalaS*, VII 1-11, *PauS* XLVII 1-61; *VS* XII, 1-36, *ViṣṇutilakaS*, VI 1-21, *VK* p 6, *SA* II, *KA*, II 1-91; *JK*, XIII

1236 *PāS* III 1 40-47,

1237 *SprS* V 9

1238 More than the *Āgama* texts, the *Śilpaśāstra* works contain clear directions for this *Aparājitapṛcchā*, LII-LV, *Kāśyapaśilpaśāstra* II & III, *Mānasāra*, VII 253-69, *VK* pp 17-18, *SS* XXIV 291, *PāS* III 27 5-20, V 1 48-55, *JS* XVI 103, *KapiñjalaS* VIII 10, *VS*, XII 48

1239 Several types are mentioned *VK* pp 9-11, *KA* II 64-72, *PāS* III 2 1-16, *KapiñjalaS* IX, JK XVII This is dealt with in greater detail in the *Mānasāra* IX & X For further details, see H Daniel Smith, pp 16-20

1240 *PāS* III 2 21b-27

1241 *Ibid* III 2 17-27, *KapiñjalaS* XII 98, *JS* X 351, *KA* V 25b-33b, *SA* X 1-44a.

1242 *PāS* III 2 29, cf *KapiñjalaS* IX 15-17a, 23-30

1243. *PāS* III 3 33b-61a Subrahmanya, by which name Skanda is known in Tamil Nadu and Śāstā known as Aiyanār are assigned specific places *Ibid.* III 2. 35b, 41b The influence of the Tamil language is found in the use of the word '*mālikāyām*', *Ibid.* III. 2. 58b, 52b, *KapiñjalaS* IX 34-41, *VK* p 8.

are stated,[1244] and provision is to be made for their residence.[1245]

The ground is to be ploughed, and seeds are to be sown to test, from their sproutings, the quality of the soil [1246] *Mantras* are to be recited as enjoined [1247] Images of some deities are to be placed in some fixed places as enjoined in the *Āgama* texts.[1248]

The structure of the temples must vary according to the capacity of the *yajamāna* The temple built by a rich man must be larger when compared to that built by a person of middle income. The structure should be such as to display the six paths (*sad adhvānah*) through its various portions.[1249] The number of enclosures must be five [1250] While the *Śrīpraśna* and *Vimānārcanakalpa* mention seven,[1251] the *Nāradīya* [1252] mentions only three. The corners of the ramparts must have on them the

1244 *PāS* III 2 61b-66a, Here is mentioned the particular kind of *arcaka* to worship a particular deity It is curious to note that a *bhāgavata* should himself worship Durga Vide —

दुर्गां संपूजयेद्देवीं सदा भागवतः स्वयम्.

Ibid 65a

1245 *PāS* III 2 66b-73, *VK* p 12

1246 *Ibid* III. 3, *SprS* V, *KapiñjalaS*, VIII, *VS* VI 67-85, *VK* III, *SA* V, *Kāśyapa Śilpaśāstra*, I, *Mānasāra* V

1247 *PārS* III, 39-40a, *VK* p 4, *SA* V 26-27a, *KA* II 43-54, 58

1248 *PāS* III 9 12-52, *VisvāmitraS* XXI, *SA* IX, H Daniel Smith's comments on pp 142-43 are of great interest

1249 *SS* XIX, *PāuS*, XXX 41a, 203-5, *VisvāmitraS* IX, *NāradīyaS* IX *SprS* XXIV, XXVI

1250 *Manasāra* recommends five *prākāras* in a temple, XXX 5-7 Cf *Kāśyapaśilpaśāstra* ch 43, *Silparatna*, I 40, *Visnutilaka*, VI, 320b-327, *PāS* III 10 2-4a

1251. *Śprs* ch 10, *VK* ch 19

1252. *NāradiyaS*. XIV. 18.

image of a lion or Garuda.[1253] Various *maṇḍapas* are required to be constructed such as *āsthānamaṇḍapa*, kitchen, clothes store, *dhanālaya*, granary, *yāgamaṇḍapa*, *kalyāṇamaṇḍapa* and so on.[1254] Specific directions are given for keeping the retinue of God inside certain enclosures.[1255] Regarding towers, some texts declare that each enclosure should have a tower in each direction,[1256] some speak of the height of the towers.[1257] The doors should, besides offering security, be beautiful and symmetrical. They must have the painted figures of gods.[1258]

The temple that is constructed is taken to represent the body of man. The *sanctum sanctorum* represents the head, the *śukanāsi*[1259] which is next to it is the neck, the *ardhamaṇḍapa* represents the chest and shoulders, and the *prākāras* the thighs and knees and the tower the feet. The significance lies in God's dwelling in the devotee. The parts of the *vimāna* such as *adhiṣṭhāna*, *pada*, *prastara* and others refer to the limbs of God who is enshrined in the *sanctum sanctorum*. *Garbhagṛha*, *Ardhamaṇḍapa*, *Mahāmaṇḍapa*, *Snānamaṇḍapa*, *Alaṅkāramaṇḍapa* and

1253 Vide

उपरिष्टाच्च शालानां सिंहो गरुड एव वा ।
कल्पनीयः प्रयत्नेन ध्वजयष्टिः समन्ततः ॥

PāS III 10-11

1254 *PS* XXXIV 19b-21, *NāradīyaS*, XIV 24-32, *MārkaṇḍeyaS*, II. 71, *SprS* X

1255 *PāS* III 10 94-144a, *IS* XI, *PārS* XI 31 337, *KapiñjalaS* XII 164-188, XV 38b-50, *VS* XXIII 60, *SA* X 1, *KT*, III, *VK* CII XX, *VSS* XXXIV

1256 *ViS* XXXIII 19

1257 *VK* X

1258 *PārS* X, For details on the materials used for making the icons, pedestals and iconometry, see H. Daniel Smith, *Vaiṣṇava Iconography*

1259 Vide *Śilparatna*, XXXV.

Sabhāmaṇḍapa represent the *Mūlādhāra*, *Svādhiṣṭhāna* and other *cakras* in the body. The seven *prākāras* represent the seven constituents (*dhātu*); fluid, blood, flesh, marrow, bone, sinew and virile fluid; or matter, intellect, ego, subtle elements, organs of sense and elements [1260] The five *prākāras* may refer to the five sheaths, namely, *anna*, *prāna*, *manas*, *vijñāna* and *ānanda*. The three *prākāras* represent the self, matter and body The *dhvajasthambha* is a pillar of *dharma* It represents the *Brahmanāḍī* with *Iḍā* and *Piṅgalā* on both sides

Installation of the idols is to be carried out after the temple is constructed. It is explained that through this God remains there to shower His favours to His devotees [1261] It is of five kinds, each yielding different results. The number of idols to be installed is generally five. The *Vaikhānasa* names these as *dhruva*, *kautuka*, *utsava*, *bali* and *snapana*.[1262] The *Pāñcarātra* lists five or six idols—*dhruva*, *utsava*, *bali* *tīrtha* and *śayana* with *snapana* sometimes making the sixth.[1263] Sometimes they are known by other names *mūla*, *karma*, *nitya*, *mahotsava*,

1260. Cf

त्वग्मांसादिभूताहङ्कारमहदव्यक्तरूपतः ।
यः सप्तावरणीनस्तु परस्तात्प्रकृतेरपि ॥

Diviyasūricarita, I 15.

1261.

तिष्ठत्यनुग्रहार्थं च सा प्रतिष्ठेति कीर्तिता ।

Paus xxxviii 18a.

1262 *SKS Brahma* vi *PārS*, xv 4-14a, *VS*, xv 2. *VK* p 218

1263 Vide

कर्मार्चा चोत्सवार्चा च बल्यर्थार्चा तथैव च ।
स्नानतीर्थोभयथार्चा स्वापोत्थार्चया सह ॥
प्रतिमाः षड् विधातव्याः पूजायमुत्तमा भवेत् ।

PāS iii 19 1b,
Cf, *SprS*. xiv. 2, *IS*. xvii 238b-239a.

snapana and *tarunālaya.*[1264] Idols are said to be of three kinds according to their postures—standing, reclining or sitting in the first, second and third storeys respectively, as in the temples at Tirukkoṭṭiyūr, Madurai, Uttiramerūr and Parameśvaravinnagaram at Kañcipuram[1265]

For the installation ceremony a hall is to be built for performing *homa*· this is the *yāgaśālā*. The sacred fires vary according to the deities to be installed *Āhavanīya*, *anvāhārya*, *gārhapatya*, *āvasathya* and *sabhya* are the five fires according to the *Vaikhānasa* The *Pāñcarātra* mentions eight fires: *āhavanīya*, *dakṣiṇa*, *gārhapatya* *aupāsana*, *sabhya*, *kavyāda*, *vaidyuta* and *bāḍaba*[1266] *Mantras* are prescribed for doing particular *homas* to individual deities[1267] The idols are to be kept immersed in water or milk or *pañcagavya* or lying on a costly bed. This process is called *adhivāsa*[1268] In the meanwhile, God's presence is invoked in jars filled with consecrated water. The idols are then taken out and carried behind the *arcakas* who go in advance bearing the jars of consecrated water to the inner shrine where the *dhruvabera* is already stationed The idols are kept in the places assigned to them They are all sprinkled with the waters beginning with the *dhruvabera* which becomes veritably

1264. *VSS*. x 82-83, *AniruddhaS* xii 19b-20

1265 *KA* V 74-83 Cf *PāS* III 15-16 for other pstures-

1266. (i) *VK* pp 215, 238, 256-8, *SA*. xxix 12-20, *KA* vi 125-37, 146-72

(ii) *SXS Śiva* I. 18-20 From other sources, the fires are held to be of twentyseven kinds Vide *Vidhānapārijāta* cited in the *Vācaspatya*, I p 50.

1267 *LT* xlv-xlviii, *VIS* xii-xiii, *SA*. xxx. 36-53; *VK* xix, xx, *KA* xxx, 115-129.

1268 *VK* p 210 *KA* VI 94-103 Cf note on this in *LT* translation p. 320, *LT*. lix. 68-73, *PārS* pp. 121-124 *KA* vii 686-80, *PārS*, xv 212-221

God Himself[1269] *Nyāsa* is then done on the other idols (differently for each), and the process is repeated[1270] The other idols get consecrated with the power of the *dhruvabera*[1271]

During this ceremony, the four *vyūha* deities of the *Pāñcarātra* or the four deities or five *vīras* of the *Vaikhānasa* and all deities forming the retinue of the Lord are also installed in fixed places and *homa* offered to them[1272] The installation of five idols is elaborately treated.

The *dhruva-bera* must be black in colour.[1273] It is said that this colour is the original one and is the source of other colours[1274] The *utsava* idol and the *balibera* must not be made

1269 Vide

सर्वत्र व्यापिनस्तस्य श्रीविष्णोः परमात्मनः ॥
एकत्र स्मरणं यत्तदावहनमितीरितम् ।

SA xxxi 62b-63a.

Cf *PāS* iii 27 90-102, *IS* xviii 126b-127a, 406b-444, *VS* xvii 6. 47 *JK* lxiv, *Ibid.* p 99, *Visnutilaka*, vi 451-452 *KapiñjalaS* xii 162-166,

1270 *PAS* III 28 65-72 Cf *Visnutailaka*, VI *Nyāsa* is also to be done on the idol Vide

यथा देहे तथा देवे न्यासं कुर्याद्विचक्षणः ।

SKS *Brahma* iv 70b

1271 Cf *LT* translation, p 325, *PārS* xx It is of five kinds. (*SKS* *Brahma*, vi 114-118a, *VS* xv) or of seven kinds according to the *mantras*. (*PāS* xix 1 2) For details, see *PāS* iii 28 34-37, 60-64

1272 *SA* xxxviii *VK* pp 245-8 Cf *pancavīras* in *KA*, xxx 40-133 For *parivāradevatas*, *KA* vi *VK* xxxiv *SS* ix, x, xii, *PāS*. iii 29

1273. *SA* xxi, 6-10.

1274. Vide

वर्णानामपि सर्वेषामादिःश्याम उदाहृतः ॥
श्यामवर्णं हरे रूपं तस्माच्छ्रेष्ठतमं विदुः ।

Ibid xxi 2b-3a Cf *VK* p. 103.

of stone or wood [1275] There are rules which enjoin the measurements of the pedestal and figure of each *bera* in proportion to one another and to that of the *dhruva-bera* [1276]

The *dhrvva-bera* may have three postures, standing (*sthānaka*), sitting (*āsana*) and lying (*śoyana*) The *utsava bera* must normally be of the standing posture, and rarely in the sitting posture, irrespective of the posture of the *dhruva bera* [1277] The *Vaikhānasa* texts classify the idols into four kinds, *yoga*, *vīra*, *bhīma* and *ābhicārika*, and lay down their postures and the weapons they should hold [1278] As a general principle,[1279] the idols of their temples have *śankha* and *cakra* in the two hands, a left hand in *katihasta* pose and a right hand with *varamudrā*, offering boons This is the case with Śrī Śrīnivāsa in the Tirumalai hills In some templ s [1280] adopting the same *Āgama*, the right hand has the *abhaya* pose, granting security, and in some others,[1281] the club adorns the right hand The club is to be a weapon only in the case of a posture [1282] and is not reckoned as a general one The club is indispensable for

1275 *VK* p 149

1276 *SA* ch xviii 23, *KA* vi 1-33 *VK* ch xxiii Different versions are given according to the postures Vide *SpiS* ch, xi-xiv *PāS* iii, 12, 15, 19

1277 *PāS* iii 95: *SA* ch xx lxviii Some of them are found in the temple at Tiruvallikkeni, Madras city Cf *VS* xi 307-311

1278 *VK* ch 19 *KA* v, 75 mentions *viraha* in the place of *ābhicārika* The last is dropped in *SA*, xx 19 Cf *Viṣnutilaka*, vi. 412b-424

1279 Vide

चतुर्भुजः शङ्खचक्रधरो कट्यवलम्बितहस्तः ।
VK p 502, Cf *KA*. xxx, *SA* xx

1280. Tirukkoyilūr and Parameśvaravinnagaram.

1281 At Tiruvallikkeni, the *utsava* idol has a goad and not a *gada* See *Periya Tirumozhi*, II 3 1

1282 The *viraha* posture must have *gada*. *KA* V 77 *VK* refers to this p 96

an idol according to the *Pāñcarātra*, and the *abhayahasta* is equally essential. But in some temples[1283] of the *Pāñcarātra* kind, the club is absent and the figure is identical with that in the *Vaikhānasa* temples It seems that the mode of worship should have changed from *Pāñcarātra* to *Vaikhānasa* and *vice-versa* during the 17th century when the idols were removed to places of safety to save them from the Muslim forces which attacked south India.

The *Pāñcarātra Āgama* attaches importance to the *vyūha* concept and speaks of the installation of these deities[1284] Five *mūrtis* and *vīras* are required to be installed according to the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*.[1285] However, they do not appear to have been installed as such in the temples nor are they found to receive daily worship.[1286] Besides, both the *Āgamas* enjoin the installation of the *vibhava* forms of God. But there also, only some get represented such as Narasiṁha, Rāma and Kṛsna in temples where the principal deities are other than these.

The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* in particular enjoins the installation of Matsya and Kūrma *avatāras* in villages, the sea-shore, forests and hills There must be no *kautuka* image for the *dhruva bera* of these.[1287]

Some *vibhava* forms are of more than one type Varāha is of three kinds—Ādivarāha, who rescued the earth from the nether regions and whose face only should be that of the boar, as at Śrīmuṣṇam near Chidambaram, Pralaya-varāha who saved the

1283. Tirumohūr, Pavazhavannan at Kāñcī

1284 *ViS* xi xix xxxv

1285 *SA*. xxxviii *VK*. *KA* vi, xxx.

1286 Tirunaraiyūr now called Nācciyār Koil, Tirumāliruñcolai,

1287. SA. VIII. 15b.

people at the time of the cosmic deluge; Yajña-varāha who killed the demon Hiraṇyākṣa who had been destroying sacrifices or *yajñas*.

Girija and Sthūṇaja are two forms of Narasiṁha. The former represents the Lord's descent to the earth on the representations of the gods about their sufferings at the hands of the demon, Hiraṇyakaśipu After killing the demon, He stayed in forests on the hills His wrath was appeased by the prayers of the gods. 'Sthūṇaja' is Narasiṁha as He burst out from a pillar to attack the demon Sometimes three more kinds are mentioned Sudarśana-narasiṁha is seated in the discuss and also holding a discus in each of His four hands. Lakṣmī-narasiṁha has Lakṣmī seated on His lap Pātala-narasiṁha is seated on Garuḍa There is one reference to a form seated on Ādiśeṣa and known as Yānaka-narasiṁha.

Trivikrama has three forms. In one, He has eight arms with the left foot raised to the height of the head In another, the left foot is raised to the height of the navel. The third form shows the left foot raised to the height of the forehead. Kṛṣṇa also has many forms—Navanītanaṭa (dancing with butter in hands), Pārthasārathi (as charioteer of Arjuna) and Kālīya-mardana (killing the venomous serpent, Kālīya) He is also known with four arms The idol of Vāsudeva may be of two kinds—divine (*divya*) and human (*mānuṣa*) The former has four hands of the *Vaikhānasa* kind, while the latter is two-handed.

After installation, worship is to be done to the deities every day at regular intervals[1288] The *arcaka* should attend to

1288 *Prātaḥ* (morning), *madhyāhnaḥ* (noon), *sāyāhnaḥ* (evening), *pradoṣaḥ* (twilight), and *ardharātraḥ* are the six divisions of the day when worship is offered in the temples In some shrines, it may be only thrice, twice or only once. Vide *SprS* XXVIII. 3.

the morning duties, which include *sandhyā* and *homa*,[1289] after wearing *ūrdhvapuṇḍra*.[1290] He must approach the guardians of the gates, bow to them, take their permission and enter the shrine. After prostration, he must seek permission to worship God with the *aupacārika*, *sāṁsparśika* and *abhyavāharika* materials he has procured. One must then undertake *bhūtaśuddhi* Through this process, the gross body will be burnt up by the vital airs. He will then feel himself to have been flooded by the water issuing forth from the big toe of God. Then he is to create a new body for himself out of pure *sattva* by uttering the *pañcopaniṣanmantra*.[1291]

With the pure body he must meditate upon Kūrma, the earth, the milky ocean and others which represent the powers that support the universe. He is to build a boundary around himself with the *kavaca-mantra* and then have *aṅganyāsa* and *karanyāsa* The *mantras* which he utters while doing this make him purified and enable him to feel at one with God. Then he is to worship God mentally, which is called *Antaryāga*, *Mānasika yāga* and *Hṛdyāga*. The object of meditation must be Lakṣmīnārāyana adorned with conch, discus and club The offerings must be made with the materials procured mentally The *Purusasūkta*, *Praṇava*, *Saḍaksara*, *Astākṣara* and *Dvādaśāksara* should be

1289 *AbS* XXVIII 3-10a

1290 Vide

होमपूजादिसमये सायं प्रातः समाहितः ।
ऊर्ध्वपुण्ड्रधरो विप्रो भवेच्छुद्धो न चान्यथा ॥

This is taken from Bodhāyana For details, see *SR* pp 61-65, *KA*. XXXVIII 21-30.

1291 *AbS* XXVIII 21-28 *LT* ch 35 Those who worship the deity must stand or sit to the right side of the deity.

Vide :

देवस्य दक्षिणे पार्श्वे आसने तु समाविशेत् ।

AniruddhaS, XVI, 23a.

recited during worship. *Homa* is to be performed in the fire of the triangular form of the fire-altar which is kindled by the fire of his sentience. The procedure is the same as in external worship [1292]

The external form of worship is to be undertaken after arranging for the vessels, materials and other requisites. *Vaidika* and *Tāntrika mantras*, *maṇḍalas* etc. (according to the *Āgama*) are required to be made use of here. Vināyaka is to be worshipped at the outset.[1293] There are six stages which mark this mode of worship, namely, *Mantrāsana*, *Snānāsana*, *Alaṅkārāsana*, *Bhojyāsana*, *Mantrāsana* and *Paryaṅkāsana*. At the first stage, one has to offer oneself and one's belongings to God.[1294] During the second stage, dance, music and recitation of *mantras* have to be performed during the holy bath given to the idol.[1295] Sandal paste, flowers and other offerings are to be made during this stage. Incense has to be burnt and offered to God Apart from dance and music, auspicious songs must be sung.[1296]

In this context, it is to be noted that the present-day practice of offering *mantrapuṣpa* is based on this mandate in the *Āgamas* The offering according to current usage includes the recitation of the initial *mantras* of the four *Vedas*, to be followed

1292 *LT* XXXVI *JS* XII, *PauS* XXVI 26-43, *IS* II, *PārS* V,

1293 *LT* XXXVII 65

1294 Vide

दासोऽहं ते जगन्नाथ सपुत्रादिपरिग्रहः ।
प्रेष्यं प्रशाधि कर्तव्ये मां नियुङ्क्ष्व हिते सदा ॥

PāS IV 3 140

1295 *AhS* XXVIII 49b There is no reference here to the recitation of the *Upaniṣad* and *Puruṣasūkta* which is now in practice.

1296 *Ibid.* XXVIII, 57, *LT*, XXXIX, 24b.

by *upanisadic* passages glorifying Nārāyaṇa and the *Aṣṭākṣara-mantra* Passages are then recited from the *Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Viṣṇupurāṇa* and other sacred texts. Portions from select stanzas from the *Nālāyira-divyaprabandha* and the *Stotraratna* of Yāmuna and other *Ācāryas* are then to be recited. The *Vaikhānasa* texts do not enjoin the recitation of the *Nālāyira-divyaprabandha*, but the *Pāñcarātra* works refer to the singing of passages composed in *bhāsā*, meaning 'non-Sanskrit languages' [1297] Some texts actually refer to the Āzhvārs' compositions which are to be sung.[1298]

Two features are worth noting in this context One is that the *Āgama* texts do not speak of the recitation of the Vedic passages on this occasion In all probability, during the period after Yāmuna and perhaps Rāmānuja, too, the system should have been evolved, so as to give due place for all passages which are held to be eulogistic (*stuti*) of God. Commencing from the *Vedas*, these include the Tamil *prabandhas* and also the *stotras* of Yāmuna and other *ācāryas* [1299] Another feature that is striking is that the *Āgamas* state that the *arcaka* must recite many *mantras* [1300] during worship, which include the *Puruṣasūkta*, *Jitante stotra* and others. The practice, which obtains now, is the recitation of all these by others as well who are qualified

1297 *IS.* XI. 36, 37, XIII 220, 225, *SprS* XL 34, XLII 116

1298 Vide,

चतुस्ताह्स्रिकामाद्यां द्रमिडीं स्तुतिमुत्तमाम् ।
गापयेद्वैष्णवैस्तत्र नैवाद्यान्ते दिने दिने ॥

IS XIII, 246.

1299 *AhS* XXVIII 57b *Mantratah arcayet* may suggest the recitation of *mantrapuṣpa* which is now in practice

1300. पूजकः स्वयमेव श्रावयेत् ।

VK, p. 319 Cf *PārS* XV. 363.

and trained for it. This practice is also to be noted during *snāna* when not only the *Purusasūkta* and *Upaniṣads*, but also passages from the compositions of Periyāzhvār (Viṣnucitta) are recited by all those assembled in the temple. Such a practice could be taken to have been introduced about 1000 A D or even later during the period of Rāmānuja. It is worth noting here that the *Nityagrantha* of Rāmānuja and that of Śrīranga-nārāyaṇārya do not make specific mention of this practice.[1301]

This stage is followed by *Bhojyāsana* in which food preparations are to be offered These are called *havis* and are to be sanctified by the *astra mantra* *Surabhimudrā* must be shown and then the *havis* offered to God To compensate any lapse in the offerings, *mātrā*, a special preparation made of rice, is to be offered *Mantrāsana* recurs again when fruits and betels are offered The Lord is also to be adored with dance and music [1302] Here again, a practice, not mentioned in the *Āgamas*, has come into vogue in temples A few passages from the compositions of Godā (Āndāl) and Visnucitta (Periyāzhvār) are sung by way of prayer for continued service of this kind and as *mangalāśāsana*,[1303] a sort of benediction for the Lord's glory to continue for ever This is followed by a few Sanskrit passages glorifying the pattern of worship enjoined by

1301 The *Nitya* of Rāmānuja and the *Ārādhanakārikā* of Vangipurattu Nambi prescribe the procedure for offering worship The Vaisnava tradition is primarily based on the work of Rāmānuja

Vide

यतीन्द्रोदितनित्योक्तक्रमेणैव यजेद्धरिम् ।

Prapannapārijāta, V 132.

1302 *IS* IV 189-191, 230-232,

1303 The idea of *mangalāśāsana* is derived from the earnestness of the devotees to greet the Lord and hail His auspiciousness, thus wishing for the continued availability of that vision and presence of the Lord This seems to derive from a prayer of the same import addressed to Rudra. Vide *RV* II, 33 9 It has a full development in *R*, II, 25, 32b-37.

Rāmānuja A prayer is then offered for the glory of the holy Srīranga to prosper and grow This is followed by the singing of *Vāzhittirunāmam* which means greetings for the recital of the holy name of an *ācārya* and praying that he should continue for centuries The followers of the Vadakalai school of Vaisnavas sing in the context the *Vāzhittirunāmam* of Vedāntadeśika and those of the Teṅkalai school that of Maṇavālamahāmuni These practices are all later developments, brought in under the influence of the Tamil hymns of the Āzhvārs The *arcakas* have no part to play here.

The last is the *Paryaṅkāsana* which consists in offering a bed where God could take rest The garlands and ornaments are removed lest they should cause inconvenience to Him

The six stages mentioned above together constitute the daily procedure for worship In a temple where there is more than one idol, these stages are to be taken to represent the worship offered to all the idols jointly Where there are two idols under the names, '*snāna-bera*' and '*tīrtha-bera*', the former alone gets the stage of *snānāsana* The *dhruva* and *utsava beras* get it on fixed days in a week and occasions like *ekādaśī*, *śravaṇa*, *amāvāsya* and others Even here, the *utsava bera* gets it not always in the *sanctum sanctorum*, but in a specified place outside it Similarly, the *Alankārāsana* may also be outside the inner shrine at different places according to occasion Normally, the *Bhojyāsana* is offered twice once in the noon and again early in the night The second *Mantrāsana* is twice a day, once in the noon and later in the night, following the *Bhojyāsana* The *Alankārāsana* marks the last stage only in the night when the *śayana bera* receives worship

The six stages have therefore to be looked upon as marking the acts of worship offered to all the idols jointly on ordinary days with slight variations as the occasion demands when the *utsava bera* receives some of them. During all the stages, certain kinds of offerings like the *arghya*, *pādya* and *ācamanīya*

are offered and the *dhūpa* and *dīpa* in the second and third. The *dīpa* is also offered in the last two stages[1304] The act of worship is to be undertaken at all stages with the use of the bell which is stated to be of the form of *Śabdabrahman*[1305]

The *Vaikhānasa* texts prescribe the method of worship on almost the same lines with some changes. A *brahmacārin* or *gṛhastha* is permitted to attend to the act of worship.[1306] Worship of God is taken to be of two kinds, one of which relates to God as formless (*nirākāra*) and the other to God as having a form. Worship is offered to God on the ground as in *homa*, when no form is visualized, but His presence is also invoked on the *kuśa* seat. Formlessness also characterises His worship in water (as in a jar), in the heart and in the sun's disc[1307] The five fires are to be used for doing *homa* when the five *beras*[1308] are to be worshipped and three fires (*tretāgni*) for

1304 *Nīrājana* with *ghaṭadīpa* is referred to in *AniruddhaS* XVII. 73-76

Cf

पादान्तं भ्रामयेत्पात्रं शनकैः त्रिः प्रदक्षिणम् ।
KA XIV 155a

And

दीपकुम्भं तु पाणिभ्यामुद्धृत परिचारिणा ।
देवस्य दक्षिणं पादमारभ्येतरपश्चिमम् ॥
भ्रामयेत्सर्वतोऽङ्गानि ।
PārS XV 1015-16a, *IS* IV 214

It is also of three kinds Vide *IS* IV 200-201

1305 *PāuS* xxxiv 56b, for details about *ghanta*, see *JS* xiii 197-221a.

1306 *SA* xl 7, the *brahmacarin* is prohibited from doing worship Vide *PR* p 150

1307. *KA* IX. 2b, 3a

1308 *SA* xxiv 4, only three are mentioned apart from the *dhruva* form, but *VK* p 218 mentions five.

the *dhruva*, *bali* and *utsava beras*.[1309] After performing *sandhyā*, *brahmayajña* and *homa* in the fire, he is to commence the worship of God. He must clear off from the person of God the garlands etc., offered the day before and then start his work.[1310] Four stages[1311] of worship are alone stated explicitly, namely, *snānāsana*, *alaṅkārāsana*, *mantrāsana* and *bhojyāsana* Worship is to be offered in the morning, noon and night. No bath is to be offered in the night. The offerings that are made to God are classified as of four kinds,[1312] *spṛśya*, *dṛsya*, *śrāvya* and *bhojya*. The number of personal services is given as 64, 55, 48, 42, 36, 34, 29 and 27, which are said to be of nine kinds.[1313] In another context, it is said to be nine [1314] The use of a curtain is recommended while offering the daily worship so as to keep off those who revile the *Vedas*, heretics and degraded persons.[1315]

After all the stages are completed or the second *mantrāsana* is over, the *arcaka* must prostrate himself before God. This

1309 *KA* ix 8, 9

1310. *Ibid*. ix 47-49.

1311. *JK* lxix, lxx

1312 *Ibid*. lxx.

1313 *Upacāras* are of four kinds, namely, *spṛśya*, *dṛśya*, *śrāvya* and *bhojya*. Vide *KA* x, 35-40. See *KA* x for the nature of the *upacāras* The number of *upacāras* are given differently in the different texts *VK* (pp 290-1) states them to be 1, 2, 5, 8, 11, 13, 28, 29 and 32 They are 120, 64, 32 and 16 according to *PāS* IV, 6 ,32, 16 and 11 according to *VIS* xx, 209-226 ; and 64, 55, 48 42, 36, 34, 32, 29 and 27 in *KA* x, 2-4

1314. One of them is *anumāna*. Vide *JK* p 110 where it is permitted in the form अर्चनमेतद्गृहाणाम् ; also see *SA*, xliii 1-18a.

1315 *SA* xl 66-67

prostration is of different kinds. The *aṣṭāṅga* variety is described in *Pāñcarātra* :1316 *Mastiṣka*, *Samputa*, *Prahvāṅga*, *Pañcāṅga* and *Daṇḍāṅga* are the kinds of prostration according to the *Vaikhānasa* system.1317

Sudarśana has a separate installation with specific *mantras*. 'Cakra' is the name given to this deity in the *Vaikhānasa* system 1318 The *Pāñcarātra* system attaches much importance to this deity who has a specific *yantra* for the preparation of which the *Ahirbudhnyasaṁhitā* prescribes the rules. The *yantra*

1316. Prostration is said to be of the best kind when it is done with eight limbs.

Vide

ललाटोदरजान्वङ्घ्रियुगाम्रानूर्ध्वगौ करौ ।
भूमौ सन्धाय मनसा वासुदेवमनुस्मरन् ॥

cited in *PR* p 132 from the *Saṁkarṣana-saṁhitā*.

Another description is

उरसा शिरसा वाचा मनसा च कपोलतः ।
पद्भ्यां कराभ्यां जानुभ्यां प्रणामोऽष्टाङ्ग उच्यते ॥

cited in *PR*. p. 132.

1317. Vide

मस्तिष्कमिति विज्ञेयो हृदयेऽञ्जलिसम्पुटः ।
संन्यसेत्तत्प्रणामस्तु सम्पुटः समुदाहृतः ॥
साञ्जलिर्नतकायस्य प्रह्वाङ्ग इति गीयते ।
पाणिं व्यत्यस्य बध्वैव स्वस्तिबन्धनमेव वा ॥
पादाङ्गुलिभ्यां जानुभ्यां ललाटेनावनिं स्पृशेत् ।
पञ्चाङ्ग इति विज्ञेयः पञ्चाङ्गैः करणादयः ॥
अञ्जलिं सम्प्रसार्यैवं संयग्ध्यानपरायणः ।
भूम्यां च दण्डवच्छेते प्रणामो दण्ड उच्यते ॥

V. K. P. 280.

1318. *KA.* xi. 168b-177.

may be written on birch bark also[1319] Like Viṣṇu, Sudarśana too has his own retinue.[1320]

'*Śaṭhāri*' is the name given to the sandals of God fixed to a pedestal which is placed on the heads of the devotees when they visit the shrine and offer their prayers to God. It is quite possible that this was instituted in the temples of Viṣṇu after the Tamil *prabandhas* were given importance. Śaṭhakopa, also known as Nammāzhvār, is the super-*prapanna* for all Vaiṣṇavas, and it is felt that a Vaiṣṇava must consider himself to be extremely blessed to have the *sathāri* placed on his head by the *arcaka* inasmuch as Śaṭhakopa himself is known as Śaṭhāri Some of the *Āgamas* refer to the installation of *śathāri*, calling it by the name of '*pādukāpratiṣṭhā*'.[1321]

In some *Āgama* texts, the Āzhvārs and *ācāryas* are allowed installation under the name, '*Bhaktabimba*'.[1322] Specific rules are prescribed to give them the forms appropriate to their birth, and install them in particular places like the *prākāra*, the outer quadrangle or separate shrines.

After the daily worship is over, evidently in the morning, the *arcaka* is to perform *japa* of the important *mantras*, using

1319 *AhS*. ch 36, 37, 40, 44-46 48 & 49 Note the explanation of the name 'Sudarśana'

प्रणतानां च भक्तानां यस्माच्च सुलभं सदा ॥
ददाति दर्शनं तेषां स्मृतं तस्मात्सुदर्शनम् ।

PauS, VIII 41b-42a

1320. *AhS* xxxvi 49-51

1321. *KA*. xxxiv. 23-40a, *ŚāṇḍilyaS*. xviii. It is also called *pādukā*, *SprS*. xxxv. 53a.

1322. *Ibid*. xxxiv 40b-88, *AniruddhaS*. 34, *ViṣṇurahasyaS*, xxv. *HiraṇyagarbhaS*. (43 *ślokas*, chapter not numbered).

beads for counting the number of times of repeating them.[1323] Useful information is given on the question of selecting the beads [1324]

The flowers, fruits and food offered to God are stated to become unsuited for partaking by devotees. *Nirmālya* is the name given to them.[1325] The *Āgamas* declare that these become defective by offering them to Viṣvaksena. This defect is removed by distributing it before offering them to Viṣvaksena [1326]

Regarding the food preparations, there are nine kinds broadly classified as *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama*, each one having three subdivisions of the same kind. The economic status of those who administer the temple, the nature of the temple as *svayaṁvyakta* and the like and the occasion, all determine the nature of the food to be prepared and offered to God. Of these nine kinds, some have necessarily to be offered,

1323. *SKS* *Brahma* ix. 101-3, *JS* xiv 3-5 For *akṣasūtra*. the materials to prepare it and the way of using it, see *JS* xiv 5-18, *PR*, ch. 129-130

1324 *LT* xxxix 133-147

1325 *SKS* *Śiva* v 48b-49a

1326 Visvaksena is therefore called *Śeṣāśana* What is offered to him is thrown into water Vide *LT* xl. 84, it may be given to the cow, *SA* xliii 106, *VK* p 280

Vide

यतो भगवदर्थेन त्यक्तं स्रक्चन्दनादिकम् ।
पश्चादभोग्यतां याति विष्वक्सेनपरिग्रहात् ॥
अत एव निवेद्यं तस्मैतोऽवगेव सात्त्वतैः ।
सेव्यते तेन तत्तेषामुत्कर्षस्य कारणम् ॥

Āgama-prāmāṇya, pp. 76-77.

and they have no substitutes of a lower kind[1327] Another classification gives six kinds as pure cooked rice, other dishes, admixture of these, separate keeping of these, roots and fruits.[1328]

In order to obtain specific objectives, Sudarśana is to be propitiated The procedure is given differently for kings who seek to gain victory over the regions in particular directions[1329]

Special worship is required to be undertaken on occasions which the *Āgamas* enjoin. *Dvādaśī*, *Amāvāsyā*, *Pūrṇimā*, *Śravaṇa*, *Avatāradina* (the day when the deity made His manifestation), the day on which the lunar asterism of the *yajamāna* falls, the *Caitra* and *Tulā Viṣu*, *Uttarāyaṇa* and *Dakṣiṇāyana*, and the *Sankrāntis* (the days when the sun enters divisions of the zodiac) are held to be the specific occasions when worship of particular kinds is to be offered to God. If the asterisms and *tithis* occupy ten *nāḍikās* on the next day, that day must be chosen for this worship and not the one when that asterism or *tithi* is not available at sunrise This worship must be undertaken on that day when the *tithi* is only for a very small part in the case of *Ekadaśī*, *Amāvāsyā* and *Dvādaśī*.[1330] The *Vaikhānasa* texts speak of *Śravaṇa*, two *Dvādaśīs*, *Pūrṇimā* and *Amāvāsyā* as *Viṣṇu dinas* when special kinds of worship are required to be offered[1331] However, the practice obtaining in

1327 Offerings (*havis*) are of nine kinds Vide —*VK* ch. 43, *SA* ch. 45, *ViS* xiv 113-150, *KapiñjalaS* ch 18, *NāradīyaS* ch xii, *Viṣṇutattva* ch. vi and *Viṣṇutantra* ch lix

1328 *SKS Siva* v 52-53, *PārS* ch 18

1329 *AhS* ch 39

1330 Vide

परेद्युश्चेत् कलामात्र तदेव ग्राह्यम् ।

IS xii 7a.

1331. Vide

श्रवणं द्वादशी कृष्णे च द्वादशी तथा ॥
पौर्णमास्याप्यमावास्या पञ्चैतानि दिनानि च ।
विष्णुपञ्चदिनानीति प्रोक्तान्येवं पुरातनैः ॥

SA, xlvii, 1b-2.

most Viṣṇu temples is generally to treat the monthly *Saṅkrānti*, two *Ekādaśīs*, *Amāvāsyā*, *Pūrṇimā*, *Śravaṇa* and the asterism under which God manifested Himself in the particular shrine as special for worship which includes bath (*snapana*) and procession in the streets for the *utsava* idol 1332 The *utsava* idol of Lakṣmī is taken in procession within the temple every Friday. *Śrījayanti*, *Śrīrāmanavami*, *Kṛttikādīpa*, *Dīpāvalī*, and some festivals peculiar to certain places like *Gaṅgāvatarana* 1333 or '*Padinettāmperukku*' ('the flood on the 18th day') which represents the celebration of the floods in Kāveri in July-August, are given special significance. *Kaiśikadvādśī* requires to be celebrated by having music sung in the *Kaiśika* tune On this day (which falls in November-December) the *Kaiśika purāna* is read in temples 1334

Any festival that is conducted annually or periodically in temples, is called '*utsava*' There are at least three ways in which the significance of this word is brought out The *utsava* is so called because it gives rise to delight and God is much delighted by it.

Vide:

> उत्सूते हर्षमिति च तस्मादेष महोत्सवः ।
> महाप्रीतिर्येन उत्सवेन भविष्यति ॥

ŚrīprS. XXX, 8.

1332 The number of days becomes five, if *pūrnimā* and one *ekādaśī* are left out Or *Śravana* is to be left out Otherwise, the number becomes seven If *Pūrnimā* is left out, the number becomes six Vide —*SprS.* XLVII 60-61 Yet the name *Pañcaparva* is used though without sufficient justification Or taking *Amāvāsyā* and *Pūrnimā* as one and the two *Ekādaśis* as one, the name can be justified.

1333 *SprS.* XLII.

1334. *AniruddhaS.* XXIII. 88.

The second explanation shows that it is called by that name because it is prominent, when compared to other occasions.

Vide :

उत्कृष्टोऽयं यतस्तस्मादुत्सवस्त्विति कीर्त्यते ।

SA. LIV, 3a.

The third explanation takes the word '*sava*' in the sense of misery.[1335] The festival is called *utsava*, since misery is removed through it.

Vide ·

सव इत्युच्यते दुःखं विद्वद्भिः समुदाहृतम् ॥

उद्धृतः स सवो यस्मात् तस्मादुत्सव उच्यते ।

PārS XVI. 2b, 3a. (Cf. *IS* X. 3).

Whatever be the explanation, that *utsava* provides the people of the locality with an occasion for spending their time with delight, forgetting their wonted discomforts and sufferings, is very evident wherever the annual fertivals of God are conducted.

The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* classifies the *utsava* into three kinds—*Kālotsava*, *Śraddhotsava* and *Naimittikotsava*[1336] The first-mentioned festival is conducted on specified occasions. The second is undertaken by an individual who is inspired by faith and arranges for conducting it The last one requires an occasion like famine or drought or a condition requiring the propitiation of God.

The most important festival is to be conducted at least once in a year. In some temples, it is conducted more than

1335. This sense does not seem to be correct There is another definition which is acceptable. Vide

सवो यज्ञः समाम्नातस्सर्वयज्ञविशेषतः ।

SA LIV 2b

1336. Vide *SA*. LIV 3b, *Ibid* 4b-7 for details, as also *VK* p 338 and *KA*. XIV 9-11. They are also called as *Nitya*, *Naimittika* and *Kāmya* Vide : *IS*. X. 4-10 ; *PārS*. XVI. 23.

once[1337] There is no unanimity about the number of days during which the festival should be gone through The number is stated to be 15, 13, 11, 9, 7, 5, 3, 2 and one in the descending order, the first one being treated as the best[1338] According to some, the number in this order is 9, 7 and 1.[1339] Still others give 21, 14 or 9 and 7 in the same order[1340] The festival is called *mahotsava*, a huge festival, and not *Brahmotsava*, as it is now called The fixing of the period or date for undertaking this is based on several factors The entire festival is treated as a sacrifice at the conclusion of which the participants bathe in a tank or river or sea. This bath is called *avabṛtha*, which also is to mark the conclusion of the festival The festival is to commence on a day so as to have *avabṛtha* on the days of *viṣu*, *ayana*, birthday of the king, birthday of the *ācārya* who conducts the installation, occurrence of an eclipse, monthly asterism (which may mean the day having the asterism when God made His manifestation) or the five days belonging to Viṣṇu.[1341] The festivals conducted at present are arranged to have *avabṛtha* on one of the days mentioned here In most of the prominent temples,[1342] the conclusion on the ninth day is the day with *S'ravana* The festival is conducted normally for nine days and duration of more than this number is rare.[1343] It

1337 It is celebrated twice in a year in some temples as at Tiruvallūr and four times in S'rīraṅgam

1338 *SA* LVI 64-68

1339 *Ibid* LVI 57-69, *IS* X 14

1340 *KA* XIV Cf *VK* p 339 where the number of days is mentioned as nine, seven and five, *JK* (p 147) gives the number as 30, 25, 21, 15, 12, 9, 7, 5, 3 and one *Cf SA* LVI 63-69

1341. *KA* XIV. 1b-2.

1342. *Avabṛtha* is had on the day with the S'ravana constellation in temples like Tirumalai and Kāñci. *VS*. XX. 5b.

1343. It is held for 18 days in the temple at Mannārguḍi.

is also held that each day of the festival has a presiding deity.[1344]

Elaborate preparations are to be made for conducting the festival. Collection of the sacred mud (*mṛtsaṅgraha*), and sowing the seeds of various grains (*aṅkurārpaṇa*) form the preliminary rites for the conduct of any festival *Dhvajārohaṇa* and *dhvajāvarohaṇa* are the two chief items in the festival, the former marking the commencement and the latter the conclusion of the festival. The rite connected with the former is given in a very detailed way, sometimes taking up one chapter of the text.[1345] In order to announce the commencement of the festival each day, a Pāraśava[1346] shall blow the conch, sound next the big drum and sound thrice the kettle-drum with the left hand and thrice with the right hand.[1347]

The festival is conducted daily on all days both in the morning and evening. The deity is taken through the streets of the locality both in the morning and evening On both the occasions, *homa* is performed by the *arcaka* who undertakes the responsibility of attending to the festival Offerings are then made to the guardians of the quarters and also on the *balipīṭha*, the pedestal intended for this and permanently built by the side of the *dhvajasthambha*. The idol of Sudarśana is then taken around the locality through the streets. This is intended to make the streets safe for the procession which is to follow.

1344 The names, Brahma, Ārṣa, Raudra, Vāsava, Saumya, Vaiṣṇava, Sarvadaivatya, Yāmya and Vāruṇa are given to the festivals conducted on nine days *VK*. LVI *KA*. XIV 54-66 Names are here given according to *tithi* also

1345. Vide *PāS*. IV 10, *IS* X 239-258; *PārS* ch. 16, *AniruddhaS*, ch. 20; *Kapiñjala*, ch. 22, *NāradīyaS*, XVIII; *ViS*. ch. 26, *SA*. ch. LVI.

1346. For a definition, see the *Nāmaliṅgānuśāsana*, III. 3, 210b.

1347, *IS*. XI. 33-39.

Before the actual festival commences Viṣvaksena is worshipped, as he is the leader of the army of God He is considered to be in charge of conducting the festival without inconvenience to anyone and providing security for the festival,[1348]

The *utsava* idol is taken in procession with those of Śrī and Puṣṭi on most of these days and without them on a few days. With the exception of the evening on the day when the deity is taken around the streets in the morning in the chariot, there is procession on all days both in the morning and the evening. There are specific vehicles (*vāhana*) in which the idol is carried through the streets. There is no direct statement in the text prescribing the use of particular vehicles on particular days in either of the sessions, of course, with some exceptions.

The *Pauṣkara*, *Jaya* and *Sāttvata Saṃhitās* do not treat the *Mahotsava* But, curiously enough, the *Jaya* contains additional *ślokas* in chapter I according to a manuscript which contains detailed information regarding the temple of God at Kāñcī and the festival conducted thete annually in the *Vaiśākha* month. It is correct as to the details now obtaining in the temple However, these *ślokas* could be taken to have been deliberately interpolated with a view to present the greatness of this temple. Besides being considered as one of the three gems (*ratna*), the *Jaya* is very ancient and as such, should conform to the contents of the other two *saṃhitās* which do not refer to the celebration of the *Mahotsava* in the temples at Śrīraṅgam and Melkote, where these *saṃhitās* are followed. Besides, the ancient *Āgamā* texts do not appear to have concerned themselves with such festivals in temples

1348. Vide

कालवैश्वानराख्या या मूर्तिस्तुर्यात्मनो विभोः ।
स एष द्विज देवः स्याद्विष्वक्सेनः प्रकीर्तितः ॥
PauS XX. 54.

The *Pārameśvara*,[1349] *Pādma*[1350] and *Īśvara*[1351] *Saṁhitās* and Bhṛgu's *Kriyādhikāra*[1352] mention the vehicles for some of the sessions, while the *Śrīpraśna* and other *Saṁhitās*[1353] give the entire list All the texts are agreed upon having the elephant and horse vehicles on the sixth and eighth day of the festival in the night The car festival is held on the ninth day when *cūrṇābhiṣeka*, *mṛgayā* and *avabṛtha* are also held in most of the temples, while it is held on the seventh day in some temples [1354] *Cūrṇābhiseka* is had on the sixth day there, and *mṛgayā* and *avabṛtha* on the ninth day The *Īśvara-saṁhitā* mentions the vehicles without specific reference to their being used in the morning or the evening. It is worth while noting two striking features. One is that *Garuḍotsava* is held in the night in many temples and in the morning in a few. It is held on the fifth day of the festival in the night or on the fourth day in the night in some temples like Śrīrangam In temples as in Kāñci and Tiruvallikkeṇi, it is celebrated on the third day in the morning. Secondly, the car festival is fixed for the seventh day at Kāñci, Melkote, Tiruvallikkeṇi and other places. At Kāñci the huge car used to get back to its destination after passing through the streets almost invariably after a delay of a few days; and in that case, the *avabṛtha* on the ninth duy used to get postponed. In general, it must be remarked that, except for the festivals on certain days, the pattern available in the prominent temples has influenced the system in others The

1349 *PāS* XVII.

1350 *PaS* IV 17

1351. *IS* VII 260-410

1352 *KA* XIV.

1353 *SprS* XXXV 17-19, *Aniruddha's* account is vague *Puruṣottama* (XXIV 75 6) mentions *hamsa*, *simha*, *Garuda* and *Śesa* as the vehicles to be used on the first four days respectively. *IS* XI 260b-314 *SprS*. XXXV, 18-19.

1354. *IS*. I (Addl. 7. 161a), *IS* XI. 278b-311.

Āgamas offer only a broad outline of the conduct of the festival, leaving the inner details to be settled by the *ācārya* (who must be well versed in the *caryā* aspect of the *Āgama* of the temple), according to the exigencies of the locality.

Interesting details are given for the conduct of the *avabhṛtha*. A special time and a general one are given for this, according as the temple is *svayaṁ vyakta* (where God manifested Himself of His own accord, as at Śrirangam), *divya* (consecrated by a god as at Kāñci or Āzhvār Tirunagari) *saiddha* (where *Siddhas* installed the idol) or *ārṣa* (installed by sages)[1355] The *tīrthabera* is to be offered special worship and then taken to a holy tank or river where the *ācārya* must stand in water reaching up to his navel, after sprinkling holy powder on the heads of devotees. He must plunge into the water along with the *tīrthabera* All the devotees assembled there will have a dip in that water at that time As an alternative, the *snapana* or *bali bera* could be taken instead of *tīrthabera* The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* enjoins S. darśana to be taken to the place for *avabṛtha*, which is therefore called *cakratīrtha* [1356] The plunge is to be taken thrice.[1357] Even persons related to those who take a plunge get rid of their sins and become prosperous [1358]

On the day next to the *avabṛtha* day, *puṣpa yāga* is performed in elaborate detail with profuse use of flowers [1359] This is now

1355 It may be midday or forenoon or the fore part of the night in shrines of the *Svamyavyakta* kind Vide *IS* XI 314-351

1356 The idol or discus could be used for *Avabṛtha*, *JK* LXI Both are mentioned in *KA* XIV 186 The *Pañcarātra* texts also prescribe the discus as an alternative to the *tīrthabera* (*Kriyākairavacandrikā*, p 226)

1357 *SprS* XXXVI 132

1358 *Ibid* 133

1359 *PuruṣottamaS* ch 25, *Viṣṇutantra*, ch 55, *ViS*. XXVII 131-133, *KapiñjalaS* ch 24, *SKS Ṛṣi*. V It is of three kinds. Vide *KA* XIV. 203-232, *VK* pp. 359-361

called *dvādaśārādhana* [1360] Care is to be bestowed on choosing the right kind of flowers and in conducting the festival at the specified time.[1361]

After *dhvajāvarohaṇa*, the *utsava bera* is to be taken to the *sanctum sanctorum* and placed near the *dhruvabera*

When the vehicle with the *utsava-bera*, well decorated with ornaments and flowers, is being carried through the streets, no one must stand on or sit in or occupy any portion of the vehicle. An exception is made in the case of the elephant vehicle on which the *ācārya* is to sit behind the *utsava* idol with the goad in his hand. The *arcaka* may also sit in the front part of the vehicle [1362]

As against this general rule, the *ācārya*, according to another text, can sit in the front in all other vehicles as well [1363] Those who bear the vehicle through the streets must wear a coat and a turban and be adorned with flowers and ornaments The *ācārya* and *arcaka* also must wear a turban This practice has disappeared except in Śrīraṅgam in the case of the bearers of the vehicle and perhaps in Tirupati and Tirumalai where only one *arcaka* wears the turban. However, the *ācārya* who occupies the elephant vehicle wears invariably a turban.

A significant feature of the procession when the *utsava* idol is taken through the streets of the locality in the vehicle or without it, is the recitation of the Āzhvārs' compositions in its

1360 The *Dvādaśākṣaramantra* is to be used, *pūjā* being repeated for each of the twelve syllables Since flowers are used, this is called *Puṣpayāga* Vide *V.K* p 361.. For details, see *Kriyākairavacandrikā*. p. 227.

1361 *SKS Śiva* ch 6

1362 *KA* XIV, 137-138.

1363. *Ibid.* XIV 139

forefront, and the recitation of the *Vedas* behind the deity. The *Āgama* makes a general statement about the use of the compositions in the *bhāṣā*, meaning a language other than Sanskrit. Some texts, however, mention that the best *Veda* composed in Tamil shall be sung in front.

Vide ·

गायद्भिरग्रे देवस्य द्राविडीं श्रुतिमुत्तमाम् ।

IS. XI. 236.

ऋग्यजुस्सामवेदांस्तु पठद्भिः पृष्ठत·स्थितैः ।

Ibid. XI. 231.

देवस्य पृष्ठभागे तु वैष्णवा वेदपाठकाः ।
ऋगादिभिश्चतुर्वेदैस्तोषयेयुर्जनार्दनम् ॥

Śrī pS. XXXIII 46

Cf. *KA* CLX 160

This practice must have been introduced after Nāthamuni and should have formed part of the conduct of the festival during the time of Rāmānuja. That this practice was disputed in the 14th century is evident from Vedāntadeśika's successful effort in silencing the opponents and establishing it on firm grounds [1364]

The *Āgamas* do not make clear as to why the composition of the Āzhvārs are to be sung in the forefront. An answer to this question is suggested in the following *śloka* of Vedāntadeśika :—

कर्मब्रह्मात्मके शास्त्रे कौतस्कुतनिवर्तकान् ।
वन्दे हस्तिगिरीशस्य वीथीशोधककिङ्करान् ॥

Rahasyatraya-sāra, I. 2.

1364. *Vaibhavaprakāśikā*, 79, 80.

"I bow to those whose service consists in cleaning the streets of the Lord of Hastigiri, who keep off those that raise the why and wherefore in the system which is concerned with *karma* and *Brahman*."

The systems of *karma* and *Brahman* refer to the *Mīmāmsā* and *Vedānta* systems There are persons who do not have belief in either or both of these and who want to raise queries as to the basis of every theory and practice sanctioned in these In Kāñci, there were people who served God by cleaning the streets through which the *utsava* idol was taken. They were not sweepers whose honourable profession would, however, be pleasing to them, but eminent in silencing the objections raised by the captious critics They must be not only aware of the basis of the theories and practices enjoined in the two systems, but also practise what they firmly believed in The service of cleaning the streets by these eminent scholars must have formed part of the conduct of the disciplined wise men (*śiṣṭācāra*) Cleaning of the streets in Kāñci by these must have been undertaken before the procession starts from the temple, that is, these persons must be moving well in advance of the procession The author does not write 'the streets in Kāñci', but 'the streets of the Lord of Hastigiri', which means that they belong to Him in the sense that the *utsava* idol should be taken in procession through them. Some scholars take the word, '*vīthīśodhakakiṅkarān*' used in the plural, to denote Ātreya Rāmānuja, the preceptor of Vedāntadeśika[1365] Others take it to mean some other *ācārya* who attended to this work and who taught the *Tiruvāymozhi* to Vedāntadeśika The cleaning of the streets is said to have meant the removal of the arguments of the opponents

1365 The *Sārāsvādinī* on *RTS* mentions Appillār, that is, Ātreya Rāmānuja, the maternal uncle of Vedāntadeśika as meant here by the word '*vīthīśodhakakiṁkarān*' It notes that some other *Ācārya* of the author could also have been meant, p. 41.

This may be conceded. But it is also possible to offer another interpretation. Silencing the arguments of the opponents is already stated in the second quarter of this *śloka*, and so this could not have been meant by the act of cleaning the streets. Again, it is not clear as to why the respectable person who cleaned the streets should have taught the *Tiruvāymozhi* in particular to Vedāntadeśika. Cleaning the streets could symbolically represent the purification of the streets and making them fit for God's procession through them. This purification is service (*kainkarya*) which may be mental, verbal or physical. All the three kinds are applicable here, but it may preferably denote the verbal one[1368] suggested by the word (*kautaskutanivartakān*). This should then mean that these pious people recite some holy passages which cannot be the *Vedas*, as the reciters of them have to follow God in the procession. What they recite could not be simple *stotras*, but poems literary in formation and philosophical in import which could bear parity with the *Vedas*. Since the days of Nāthamuni and Yāmuna, the *ubhayavedāntā* concept has been in vogue. While one *Vedānta* is based on the *Upaniṣads*, the other is based on the *Nālāyiradivyaprabandha*. If the *Vedas* are to be recited behind the deity, the compositions of the Āzhvārs must be recited in front. Like the Vedic *mantras* which have the power to cleanse anything of its impurity and make it flawless, the songs of Āzhvārs too should be deemed to have a similar power to make the streets free of all worldly impurities and make them fit for the Lord to be carried through. Hence it would be appropriate to take the word '*vīthīśodhakakiṃkarān*' in the sense of those who recite the compositions of the Āzhvārs in front of the Lord. Rightly enough, those who recite these compositions head the procession. The pipers and others who contribute to the music follow them. Such highly learned persons could not be mere sweepers. Mere cleaning the streets is not also meant here.

1368. *Tiruvāymozhi*, II. 10. 11.

Or, the recitation of the compositions of the Āzhvārs in the front may be explained in a different manner These compositions composed in Tamil do not get included in the Āgamic rituals followed in the temple If there is a slip in the conduct of the ritualistic performance, *samproksana* is required to be done in the temple. If the Āzhvārs' compositions are not recited, there is no expiatory rite ordained to atone for this The priests in the temple are not worried about it

Yet, these compositions have been offered a status equal to that of the *Vedas* in the conduct of daily worship and public festivals The ritual in the temple is not taken to get completed, if these compositions are not sung at the intervals that are assigned by the early *Ācāryas*

If the *Divyaprabandha* should have a place in temple worship, it is necessary to attend to it without disturbing the procedural details that have been in practice and followed in accordance with the prescriptions laid down in the *Āgamas*, It is worth noting here that the recitation of the *Vedas* is always done behind the procession, that is, after the Deity This is the case even in the temples of Śiva. When the heads of religious institutions are taken in procession around the streets in villages and towns, the *Vedas* are recited behind them So also when *mahāprasādas* are taken round the streets and also when the bridegroom starts for the bride's house for marriage A time-honoured practice like this cannot be disturbed on any account. So the *Vaisnava Ācāryas* chose to provide the reciters of the *Prabandha* with a separate place of honour in temple processions. To place them just behind the deity would amount to disturbing the hoary custom To place them behind the *Veda* reciters would mean that they are no better than *bhajana-gosthīs*. The *Prabandhas* have been considered as *Drāvida Vedas*, and so they were placed in front of the procession. Thus the Deity is taken in the procession which is led by the recitation of one *Veda* and followed by that of another.

The three *Vedas*, the *Ekāyana* recension of the *Veda*, the *Sāttvata* and other *saṁhitās* are to be recited to the right of the Lord and the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas* to His left during processions. Others, who are grammarians and logicians, may also join the procession.[1367]

There should be provision for good music at that time. The flute, *vīṇā* and other instruments will be played upon. There will also be dancers[1368] All these are to provide attraction. The atmosphere must not be puritanic, severe and solemn. Even those who do not have much faith in God should be attracted to witness the procession. There may be people whose interest may lie only in the appreciation of music and dance. Some may like only to see the paraphernalia and the show. By witnessing these, they will have an occasion to have a look at God. This is enough for the spirit of the *Āgamas* to provide for the conduct of the festivals.

Vide:

सन्दर्शनादकस्माच्च पुंसां सम्मूढचेतसाम् ।
द्विषतां हेतुदुष्टानां नास्तिकानां सदैव हि ॥

कुवासना कुबुद्धिश्च कुतर्कनिचयश्च यः ।
कुभावश्च कुहेतुश्च नास्तिकत्वं लयं व्रजेत् ॥

PauS. I 31-32.

After the return of the procession to the temple in each session, the four *Vedas* must be recited, to be followed by the recitation of the Tamil compositions of Āzhvārs. Then the *stotras* in Sanskrit and Tamil are to be sung in praise of the Lord. The practice that is now in vogue is to conclude the recitation of the Āzhvārs' compositions at first and then that of the *Vedas*.

1367. *IS.* XI. 234.

1368. *Ibid.* XIII. 92, 93-127.

Among other festivals which last over many days, mention must be made of the *Navarātri* [1369] and *Adhyayana* festivals. The former is to be concluded on the *navamī* in the *Āśvayuja* month. It begins on the *Amāvāsyā* day. As the name denotes, it is primarily intended for Śrī The Lord is to be taken on the horse vehicle on the ninth day to the *vahni* tree (also known as *śamī*). [1370] Now this is held on the *daśamī* called *Vijayadaśamī* The *Adhyayana* festival is also called the *Mārgaśīrsa* festival [1371] This is done for ten days before and after *Śukla Ekādaśī.* Viṣvaksena and the idols of the devotees of the Lord are brought to the presence of God. They are all worshipped by the recitation of the *Vedas*, Tamil *Prabandhas*, *stotras* in Sanskrit, *Prākṛta* and Tamil. The Tamil *prabandhas* are called here as the compositions (*gāthā*) of devotees. There is explicit reference to the *Nālāyiradivyaprabandha* in·

चतुस्सहस्रिकामाद्यां द्रीमिडीं स्तुतिमुत्तमाम् ।
गापयेद्वैष्णवै स्तत्रैवाद्यान्ते दिने दिने ॥

IS XIII. 246

The idols of the Āzhvārs and *ācāryas* (who are referred to by the general name, '*bhakta*') are to be honoured on the occasion.

Vide :

तत्काले भक्तबिम्बानां सम्मानं च समाचरेत् ।

IS. XIII 245

Some *Āgama* texts enjoin the celebration of festivals in every month.[1372] No *naimittika* or *kāmya* festival is to be celebrated for four months during the Lord's *yoganidrā* which concludes with the celebration of *Utthāna ekādaśī.*

1369. *NārāyaṇaS*. XLIV.

1370. *IS*. XIII 91-146. *SprS* XLIV,

1371. *Visnusiddhānta*. XXXIII *VāsiṣṭhaS*. XXII.

1372 *KA* XVIII *Agrāyana IS* XII 143 *VK* XLVI. *SA*. XLVII The *Pāñcarātra* texts do not mention any festival by the name of the month except *Mārgaśīrṣa-mahotsava*. Certain festivals like *Vasanta-utsava* are however mentioned.

The *Vasanta-utsava* is held generally for seven days, but for three days in some temples. During the day, the deity is served with proper attendance suited to the climatic conditions of the season, and there is procession in the evening within or without the temple. As in the annual festival, there are *aṅkurārpaṇa*, *homa* and other items. There is no *dhvajārohaṇa*. On the seventh day in the evening the *utsava* idol is carried through the streets on the horse vehicle and the festival is concluded by *avabṛtha* in a tank or river early in the night. The car festival or the Garuda vehicle is enjoined in some texts, but this does not sppear to be practised in any temple.[1373]

The birth-days of Śrī Rāma, Narasiṁha and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are celebrated when the idols of these deities are given bath and special worship is offered. Invariably, there is procession for the *utsava* idols of these deities In particular, on the day following *Śrī Jayanti*, there is a festival called *Śikyotsava* known as *Uriyaḍi* in Tamil[1374] The *Āgamas* enjoin the celebrations of the birthdays of other *vibhavas* as well, but the present-day practice does not appear to attach much significance to them.[1375]

1373 *PradyumnaS.* XLIV, *Viṣṇutattva* XXVII; *SprS.* XXXVIII. 24. The car festival is conducted in the temple at Tirumalai

1374 Śrījayanti in *IS* XIII, *ViS* ch XXX, *PauS* ch XLII; *Śeṣasaṁhitā*, ch 10 *Śrīramanvamī* in *Viṣṇusiddhānta*, ch 9, *ViS* ch. 29, *Śeṣasaṁhitā*, ch 10

1375 Some of them have their birth days alone celebrated, For instance Matsya in *Viṣṇutantra*, ch 14, *ViS* ch 11; *VK* ch 55; *SA.* ch 58, *KA* ch 11, Kūrma in *Śeṣasaṁhita*, ch 6, *Viṣṇutantra*, ch. 14, *ViS*, ch 11, *VK* ch. 57, *KA* ch 11 It is of two kinds, *JK* ch 79. Varāha in *Śeṣasaṁhitā*, ch. 6, *Viṣṇutantra*. ch 16, *ViS*, ch. 11; *VK*, ch. 58; *SA.* ch. 58, *KA* ch. 11. Narasiṁha in *Śeṣasaṁhitā* 4; *Viṣṇutantra*, ch. 16, *ViS* ch 11; *VK* ch. 57, *SA.* ch 59: *KA* ch 11. Vāmana and Trivikrama in *Śeṣasaṁhitā*, ch, 8, *ViS.* ch. 11, *VK.* 57; *SA.* ch. 59; *KA.* ch. 11. Jāmadagnya in *VK* ch 58, *SA* ch. 60, *KA.* ch 11. Kalkin in *VK.* ch. 69; *SA.* ch. 69, *KA.* ch 11. Rāma is represented with bow and arrows (*sāyudha*) in *KA*, XI. 87b-93a, *SA*, LX. 16-23a, as having no weapons in

The *Dīpotsava* in the Kārttika month is enjoined to be celebrated in the texts, and the practice bears testimony to it. However, there is some disparity in the *Vaikhānasa* and *Pāñcarātra* regarding the proper date for the celebration of this festival, as also those of the birth-days of Śrī Rāma, Śrī Krsna and Narasimha. Rules about the duration of the *tithi* and constellations concerned account for this difference.[1376]

On the day following the advent of the *uttarāyana* (the observance of the winter solstice) on the *Makara-saṅkrānti* day, there is a hunting festival in which the *utsava* idol is taken to a distant place Celebrations like the holy bath and others are gone through after which the Deity is brought baek to the temple.[1377]

The floating festival is conducted in the cold season (*Māgha* and *Phālguna* months) for nine, seven, five, three days or one day, and the *utsava* idol is taken in the float normally in a tank for three or five or seven rounds This is celebrated with great pomp. The float is to be respected as Ādiśeṣa and so all and sundry must not touch it or occupy it.[1378] The *ācārya, arcakas* and the *Vaiṣṇavas* who render service to the Deity and recite the

KA XI. 93a-95, *SA* LX 23a-26 Note the following remark in *VK*. about these descents of the Lord

मत्स्याद्यवताराणां रूपभेद एव शक्तिभेदो नैव भवेत् ।
तस्मात् प्रतिष्ठादीनि सर्वाणि विष्णोरिव समाचरेत् ॥

Hayagrīva, Keśava, Vaikuntha and several others are treated in the *Hayaśīrṣa-samhitā*, *ViS* and others. Those of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are treated in all the texts.

1376. *IS* ch. 13.

1377 *Ibid* XIII. 254.

1378. Vide

अन्ये तु न स्पृशेयुस्तं यस्तु शेषात्मकः प्लवः ।

IS, XII-133a.

Vedas are the only persons permitted to occupy it. In the float a decorated quadrangle is constructed where the *utsava* idol with Śrīdevī and Bhūdevī is placed. There is to be a different float to be occupied by those who play on musical instruments and the women dancers.[1379] This is not in general practice at the present day.

There are numerous other festivals like *Dolotsava*, *Davanotsava*. *Kodai-utsava* (summer festival) and others which are held each in some temples alone. *Citrāpūrṇimā*, *Padinettām-perukku*, *Pallava-utsava*, and others are peculiar to certain temples and to some areas only.

An important festival other than these is that of the birth-day of an Āzhvār or *Ācārya*, conducted for ten days in each case, the concluding session coinciding with the birth-day. It is only in certain temples that all of them have their birth-days celebrated for ten days. Normally, each has it in his place of birth. In other places, the celebration is conducted at least for the birth-day. Among the Āzhvārs, Nammāzhvār and Āṇḍāl have their celebrations for ten days in all temples. Rāmānuja's birth-day is observed in every temple with great pomp. In many temples, the festival is conducted for all the ten days in honour of the birth-days of Vedantadeśika and Manavālamahāmuni. With the exception of some, the Āzhvārs and *ācāryas* have worship with the recitation of the *Vedas* and Tamil compositions, all confined to the respective shrine itself. On the last day, that is, the birthday, their idols are taken in procession through the streets with all the paraphernalia, as in the case of the Deity. In some temples, they are taken along with the Deity After the procession, they are worshipped along with the Deity whose honours are conferred on them, before they are taken to their own shrines[1380]

1379 *Ibid* XII 110-136 , *SprS* XXXIX.

1380. *Visnutattvasamhitā*, ch, 13, 14 , *Visnutantra*, ch. 14 , *KA*. xxxiv. 49a-88 However, there is no mention here of the conduct of the festivals in honour of them.]

During the procession through the streets, devotees from each house offer fruits like plantain, mango, coconut and others. The *areaka* has to offer them to the Lord without uttering any *mantra*.[1381] The devotees are to be shown God's favour by placing the *S'athāri* on their heads.[1382] People who render service on these occasions, would get the fruit of performing a sacrifice. Special benefits are assured for those who participate in the car festival.[1383] The *Āgamas* have the unique distinction of liberalism by an open declaration that the touch of the untouchable on such occasions would not give rise to any defect or pollution.

Vide ·

तस्मादस्पृश्यस्पर्शो न दोषाय भवेत् ।

VK. p. 353.

The energy of all the people should be conserved and converged to bestow pointed attention on the conduct of the festival of God No other deity of the locality must have a festival during this period 1384

Snapana, giving an ablution to the Deity, forms an important part of the contents of the *Āgamas* It is of various kinds. Generally, it is given to the *dhruvabera* on a particular day in a week and to the *utsavabera* on fixed occasions like *Ekādasī*, *Amāvāsyā* and *S'ravaṇa* and others. A special hall is required for the purpose. Small pitchers (*kalaśa*) are to be made out of certain metals and materials and of prescribed dimensions. Certain kinds of precious stones and of grains are to be procured and put there. The number of pitchers varies according to the

1331 *KA* xiv 145b-147.

1382 *SprS* 35-53a

1383. *PāS* iv 11, *IS* xi 306.

1384. *SA*. lvi, 95b-98a ; *VK*. p. 362.

occasion.[1385] Sometimes one hundred and eight of them are required and rarely one thousand and eight. The particular spots, directions and method according to which they are to be placed, are detailed in many of the texts.[1386] For offering the bath, apart from pure water, *pañcagavya*, curds, milk, honey, and other liquds are required, and they are to be filled in pitchers kept in specified places Different *mantras* are given to sanctify the various substances mentioned above. These pitchers are to be honoured with *arghya*, *pādya*, *ācamanīya*, *dhūpa*, *dīpa*, *naivedya*, *ārātrika* and other *upacāras*. Then, as per the prescribed method in the texts, the *ācārya* must perform *snapana* to the deity to the chanting of the *mantras* enjoined to be used. There are to be short intervals between the use of a certain number of pitchers containing certain ingredients. During those intervals, the Deity must be offered some *upācāras* including *naivedya*. The *Āgama* texts refer to other kinds of *snapana*. *Mahābhiseka* is the name given to *snapana* conducted on an elaborate scale.[1387] Worldly prosperity and the like are stated to accrue to those who undertake to conduct *snapana* of these kinds [1388]

When the work of *snapana* is done to the Deity, the priest who attends to this work must himself take at first the holy water used for the purpose.[1389] If this is not done, the work of

1385. *Maṇḍala*, *Nyāsa* and *Mudrās* play a prominent part in *Snapane*. Vide. *LT* ch 34, *SKS* *Śiva*. ch 8, *PauS* ch 14, *IS* ch 15, *PārS*. ch 21, *VS*. ch 26, *SprS*. ch 27, *KA* ch 13, *SA*. ch 41-50 It is said to be of nine kinds *Ibid* ch. 52, *VK*. ch. 47-9, *ViśvāmitraS*. ch 19, *JK* ch 55-7.

1386 *PāS* IV. 9, *SA* ch. 61, *ViśvāmitraS* ch. 20 The formation of the *Kalaśas* is given in charts, see Introduction to *PārS* pp.7-33.

1387. *AhS*. ch. 34; *PāS*. IV. 8.

1388. *PāS*. IV. 137-138, *SA*. XLIX. 3, 4.

1389. Vide.

तीर्थं प्रथममर्चकः पिबेत्

SA. lxx, viii. 39a.

snapana is considered as unfinished.[1390] He will then distribute that water to those assembled there on the occasion. The holy water will be given thrice to each one. The person who receives it, must take it without allowing even a drop to remain in the palm.[1391] Those who take it must not wash their hands also, as it would then mean that the palm has become polluted through its touch with the lips The holy water can never become unholy. On the other hand, it purifies the lips and through them the entire body and the self there. The palm therefore becomes and remains pure.

The prrsent-day custom of offering the holy water at first in the temple every day when the *pūjā* or *snapana* is done, to certain persons who are *Ācārya purusas* and who have their rights to receive it so, without the priest partaking it, has no sanction in the *Āgamas*.

The *Ārjita-sevās* in the temple as those in Tirumalai are to be treated as coming under the *kāmya* kind.[1392]

Several shortcomings are bound to happen while attending to temple worship, preparations for temple-building, idol-making

1390. Vide:

विष्णोस्तीर्थं प्रसादं च पूजान्ते देशिकोत्तमः ॥
अपीत्वा यद्विवान्येभ्यो दद्यात् पूजा हि निष्फला ।

SprS. xxix 103b-104a.

1391. Vide

तीर्थं हि त्रिः पिबेद्बिन्दुवर्जितम् ।

SA. lxxviii. 43a.

1392. Vide.

चतुर्णां पुरुषार्थानामुद्दिश्यान्यतमं फलम् ॥
उत्सवोऽनुष्ठितः काम्यः सङ्कल्पितफलप्रदः ।

TS. x. 8b-9a.

and other items concerned with the temple. Hence the *Āgama* texts have enjoined and expounded the rites of expiation in detail These acts are all the more necessary, because the people visit temples and worship God there Defects of commission and omission detract from the sanctified presence of God in the idols there. So much so, people who attend the temple cannot get the benefit for their worship Hence the *Āgamas* (the *Vaikhānasa* in particular) contain many chapters on expiation (*prāyaścitta*) 1393

A very important kind of expiatory rite is noticed in the *Pārameśvara* and *Pādma Samhitās* It is called *Tulārohana.* For the lapses committed by the ruling king he is to be weighed in a balance against gold The pieces of gold should be distributed among the deserving 1394

The practice of weighing a person against gold or silver or any other object may be anterior to the period when these *saṃhitās* came to include it as part of expiatory rites. This practice has been continuing even to the present day in some form or other, but not necessarily as part of expiation for the shortcomings in the conduct of temple worship

Among these rituals, the *Pavitra* is the most important and is held to be of paramount significance in making amends for the lapses, derelictions and imperfections in the worship

1393 The earlier *Pāñcarātra* texts have one chapter for expiation, but do not refer to any defect from the *Vaikhānasa* practices Vide —*JS* XXV, *PauS* XLIII, *SKS* *Rsi*-VIII Later texts prohibit the admixture of the two *Āgama* traditions and also that of the *Siddhāntas* of the *Pāñcarātra*, Vide —*PāS* IV 18 & 19, *PārS* XIX, XXI & XXII, *IS*, XIX, *KapiñjalaS* XXXI, *PurusottamaS* XXX, *VS* XXV, *ViS* XXXIX, *SprS* L The *Vaikhānssa* texts also display vehemence in condemning the *Pāñcarātra* mode of worship Besides, they give elaborate procedures Vide — *VK* LXI-LXXVII, *KA* XX-XXVII, *SA* LXVI-LXXX, *JK*. LXL-CV. *KapiñjalaS*, XXXII

1394 *PārS*. XX. Cf. *Śilappadikāram*, XXVII 174-176

throughout the year.[1395] '*Pavitra*' is the name given to strings made up of smooth, fine and white threads, folded three or four times or more, prepared by maidens or women who are aged or widows. They have to be purified with the *astramantra* They are to adorn the idol, pitchers, *mandalas*, the pit where fire is lit (*agni kuṇḍa*) and other places [1396] The Lord is to be given a sacred bath and worshipped with all *upacāras*. *Homa* must be then performed. The *Vedas* must be recited and music played upon instruments. The *ācārya* will appeal to God to forgive him for all lapses in his service rendered through the year [1397] The Brahmins, recluses, *Vaikhānasas* and others will attend and be suitably honoured at the end of the session which may last for three or seven days,

1395 *JS* xxi, *SS* xiv, *PauS*, xxx 34-36, *IS* xiv

Vide

संवत्सरकृत्याकृत्यदोषः समयपूर्वकः ।
नाशमायाति वै क्षिप्रं पवित्रारोपणान्ननु ॥
पाति यस्मात्सदोषं हि पतनात्परिरक्षति ।

PāS IV 14 259, 260a.

See *VP* II 6 37-41 for expiation of a general kind Cf *KA* xxxi, *VK* lxxviii For a critical estimate, see H Daniel Smith "*Prayaścitta in the works of the Pāñcarātrāgama*" *Brahmavidyā*, Vol xxx Parts 1-4

1396 Vide, *PāS* IV 14

1397 Vide

पवित्राख्यमादिष्ट वत्सर प्रति त्वया ॥
तन्मयाकृतमध्यक्षमर्चितं यदनिर्मलम्
क्रियायोगादसम्पूर्णं तन्मे निर्मलतां नय ॥
ज्ञानतो वापि यथोक्तं न तु तन्मया ।
तत्सर्वं पूर्णमेवास्तु सुतृप्तो भव सर्वदा ॥

PauS xxx 148b, 150.

the last day being celebrated with *pūrnāhuti* 1398 The fruits which accrue to the *ācārya*, *arcaka*, the *Vedic* scholars and others who contribute to the successful execution of this in some way or other are stated to be according to their aptitudes and expectations 1399 The occasion for the conduct of this festival is only in the *daksināyana* 1400

Acts of expiation are varied according to the nature of the lapse and of the act itself On occasions, when impurity (*āśauca*) stains the *arcaka*, God cannot be worshipped by or through him Some arrangements are to be made to conduct the daily worship through others who are also qualified to attend to it After the period of pollution is over, *homa* must be performed in the fire and worship re-commenced 1401 The possible lapses and defects are classified under several heads, such as not doing the work of worship at the proper time, swerving from the correct path of good conduct, and so on.1402

In general, both the *Āgamas* lay stress on the power of *mantras* So they prescribe not merely *homa* in the sacred fire on occasions,1403 but also *japa* of certain *mantras*.1404 This

1398 Vide

महदर्चनपूर्वं तु कृत्वा पूर्णावसानिकम् ॥
क्रमशश्चोपसंहृत्यं स्वयं गुर्वात्मनाथवा ॥

Ibid xxx 160 Cf *PārS* xii 437-439

1399 *PauS* xxx 173-195

1400 *JS* xxi 5b-6 *PauS* xxx 8 *KA* mentions *Mārgaśirsa* also as the period for this in xxxi 24-29 Cf *VK* pp 469-470

1401. *PauS* xxx 24-27 , 211 *SKS Rsi* viii

1402 *SKS Ṛṣi* viii 27-186 , *JS* xxv 91, 92a , 112b, 114 , 119-122, *ViS* xxxix 1-22 , 325-331 , *PauS*, xxxii , *KA* xxiv , *VK*. lxvi.

1403 *VK* lxx , *KA* xxix , *SA* lxxxii, *ViS* xxxix 17b , *JS*. xv. 161-223 , *AhS* xlvi-xlvii, *PāS*, iv 12 , *IS*. xxv , *SKS Indra* iv.

1404. *AhS*, xx. 56 , *JS* xiv , *KA*. xxxviii 63b-64a

practice is to be traced to the *Smṛti* texts which are directly inspired by the *Kalpasūtras*.

There is a certain discipline which one should observe while worshipping the Lord in the temple.[1405] One must not approach the temple riding a vehicle or wearing sandals or with a distracted mind.

Vide :

न यानपादुकारूढो न सोपानत्कपादभृत् ।
न विक्षिप्रमना भूत्वा संविशेद्भगवद्गृहम् ॥

SS. XXI.

Music, dance and discourses of a holy nature must not be stopped while they are in progress in the temple. One must not worship the Lord with his body covered with a cloth.

Vide :

वस्त्रेणाच्छाद्य देहं तु यो नरः प्रणमेत्तु माम् ।
श्वित्री च जायते मूर्खस्त्रीणि जन्मानि भामिनि ॥

Varāhapurāna, II

No one should spit in the temple On must not enter the shrine after having taken food as a *nimantrita* in a *śrāddha*. Incoherent talk is to be avoided there.

Vide ·

अनिबद्धप्रलापान् ये कुर्वते मम संनिधौ ।
तेऽपि तित्तिरितां गत्वा जायन्ते जन्मपञ्चकम् ॥

Ibid.

1405 *Varāhapurāna*, ch 108 lists 32 *apacāras* but chapter 65 (in the printed text, identified by the editor of the *Pāñcarātrarakṣā* (Adyar edn.) as dealing with this subject, does not treat it.

Those who go away from the temple, ignoring the discourse that is held there would become deaf and dumb.

Vide :

कथायां कथ्यमानायां मन्दिरे मे वरानने ।
अनादृत्य च ये यान्ति तेषां पापफलं शृणु ।
बधिरास्तु भविष्यन्ति मूका वै जन्मपञ्चकम् ॥

Ibid.

One should not stretch his legs and lie in the temple. The Lord should not be worshipped with the flowers intended for some other deity. One must not smell the flowers and food preparations which are intended for God This practice continues now also in a way, when they are taken by the assistants to the priests (*pañcārakas*) with the nose and mouth covered with a cloth. During festivals, one must not bathe feeling that he has become impure by the touch of others.

Vide :

उत्सवे वासुदेवस्य यः स्नाति स्पर्शशङ्कया ।
स्वर्गस्थाः पितरस्तस्य पतन्ति नरके क्षणात् ॥

Ibid.

Remaining without bowing to the Lord during festivals and raising one hand while bowing constitute offences Lying down, taking food, wasteful talk, loud talk, purposeless argument, crying, shedding tears, quarrels, attacks on others and such other activities are forbidden in the temple. Censuring or extolling others, taking what is not offered to God, not offering fruits and other things which are then available, sitting down without the hind part touching the ground, reverential salutation of any person, silence before elders, self-praise and abuse of gods are deemed offences.[1406] Those who consider the idol as metal and the preceptor as a human being, go to hell.

1406. *PR*, pp. 134-135.

Vide :

> यो विष्णोः प्रतिमाकारे लोहभावं करोति च ।
> यो गुरौ मानुषं भावमुभौ नरकपातिनौ ॥

One should stand to the right of God and worship [1407]

Although worship of God with devotion and uttering the name of God are recommended as the means for salvation,[1408] yet the *arcā* form is strongly recommended for worship in the *Āgamas*.[1409] Even heinous crimes would not affect the person who commits them, if he were simply to have a look at the *arcā* form of God from foot to head

Vide ·

> आपीठान्मौलिपर्यन्तं पश्यतः पुरुषोत्तमम् ।
> पातकान्याशु नश्यन्ति किं पुनस्तूपपातकम् ॥

Śāndilya Smṛti, II 89

1407 Vide

एव यथार्हं प्रणम्योत्थितश्च भगवतः पुरस्ताद्दक्षिणतोऽवस्थाय गुरुपरम्परया भगवन्तं शरणमुपगम्य

PR p 132

1408 *Bh* xii 3 51

1409 *KA* I 13, 14a ,

प्रतिमाराधनं समूर्तं तच्छ्रेष्ठं यजमानाभावेऽप्यच्छिन्नं भवति ।

VK p 5

> आकारे तु कृता पूजा स्तुतिर्वा ध्यानमेव वा ।
> विधिना शास्त्रदृष्टेन देव एव कृते भवेत् ॥
> भक्त्या परमयाकृष्टो देवदेवस्स योगिभिः ।
> तेषामनुग्रहार्थाय रूपं भेजे चतुर्भुजम् ।
> तस्मात्तेनैव रूपेण देवदेवं समर्चयेत्

ParS III 8 10a.

CHAPTER X

ĀGAMAS AND THE WAY OF LIFE

Every society has codes of ethics helpful to its well-being. The standards of good conduct and moral behaviour enjoined by them vary from individual to individual and from one stratum of society to another All such codes and standards among the Hindus derive from the *Vedas*

Moral goodness is a question of behaviour 1410 Everlasting happiness is the goal of good conduct The lawbooks (*Smṛtis*) and the conduct of those steeped in Vedic traditions are also authoritative 1411 Moral behaviour is alone held to contribute to individual progress and social welfare. Mere knowledge (even if it be philosophical or theological) can lead to no certain goal 1412

The ethical codes are supported and stabilised by religious traditions. Hence the religious colouring given by Hindus even to secular activities The epics and the *pucānas* have played a significant role in fashioning moral concepts—particularly the *Mahābhārata*, the *Visnudharmottara*, the *Visnupurāṇa*, the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Bhāgavata* With the exception of the *Gītā*, these texts reveal acquaintance with the *vyūha* and *sādgunya* aspects of God, which are vital to the *Pāñcarātra*. The influence of the *Sāttvata-dharma* (which is developed in the *Mahābhārata*) may be traced to the books mentioned above.

1410 Vide

आचारलक्षणो धर्मः ।

Mbh. Anuśāsana CLXI 9

1411 *MS* II 6

1412 Vide

आचारहीनं न पुनन्ति वेदा
यद्यप्यधीता सह षड्भिरङ्गैः ।
छन्दांस्येनं मृत्युकाले त्यजन्ति
नीडं शकुन्ता इव जातपक्षाः ॥

Vasisthasmṛti.

This stanza is not found in the now available text.

Still, the wide and varied aspects of Vaisnavism are so rich and complex as to deny any significant *Āgama* influence on them.

Dependence on God in leading a virtuous life is stressed in all ancient works Thus no one has any real freedom God's (Visṇu's) will creates and sustains the world and provides the people with security,[1413] Uttering His name even light-heartedly makes for happiness here and hereafter; no need to speak of devotion or dedication of all actions to God bringing this about[1414] God is the friend of all, high or low[1415] His devotees never suffer.[1416]

Devotion is of various kinds according to physical and mental capacities.[1417] Its quality is determined by the spirit, and not by pomp or show The greatest of all activities is worship of God, and adoration of His devotees is still more worthy, for God is more pleased when His devotees receive

1413 *Mbh Udyoga*, lxvii 13-18, *Ibid Anuśasana*, cxxliv 136, *V P* I 17, 91, VI 5 80-82

1414. *V P* I 17 91, *Bh P* VI 3 24

1415. *V P* I 19 37

1416 Vide

न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ।

Bh G ix, 31, Cf *Mbh Anuśāsana*, xcvi 46.

1417

भक्तिमष्टविधां वक्ष्ये देवदेवे तु शार्ङ्गिणि ।
तद्भक्तजनवात्सल्यं तत्पूजास्वनुमोदनम्
तत्कथाश्रवणे भक्तिः स्वरनेत्राङ्गविक्रिया ।
तदनुस्मरणं नित्यं तदर्थे दम्भवर्जनम् ॥
नित्यं तदेकशेषित्वं यच्च तन्नोपजीवति ।
भक्तिरष्टविधा ह्येषा ....॥

KA, xxiv, 100-102 It is of nine kinds according to *Bh P* VII 5 23-24.

worship than when He does[1418] *Prapatti* is declared to be the surest means of attaining God[1419]

The *Kalpasūtras* and *Smrtis* that deal with the social and religious aspects of life, explain also how health and purity can be ensured. Bodhāyana[1420] and others prescribe general rules for conduct and also give specific directions for the conduct of Vaisnavas and the worship of God The *Smrtis* of Manu,[1421] Śāndilya,[1422] Vasistha,[1423] Visnu[1424] and others are similar.

1418.

मम मद्भक्तभक्तेषु प्रीतिरभ्यधिका भवेत् ।
तस्मात् मद्भक्तभक्ताश्च पूजनीया विशेषतः ।

Mbh. Aśvamedhika, CXVI, 23.

आराधनानां सर्वेषां विष्णोराराधनं परम् ।
तस्मात्परतरं प्रोक्तं तदीयाराधनं परम् ॥

Pādmottara, XXIX 81 Cf *V. P* III 7, 20-34.

1419 *Bh P* XI 12 15.

1420 *Baudhāyana Gṛhya Sūtras*, II, 13

1421 *MS* I 10, 11

1422.

आपीढान्मौलीपर्यन्तं पश्यतः पुरुषोत्तमम् ।
पातकान्याशु नश्यन्ति किं पुनस्तूपपातकान् ।

रूक्षाक्षराणि शृण्वन्वै तथा भागवतेरितात् ।
प्रणामपूर्वकं क्षान्त्या यो वदेत् वैष्णवो हि सः ॥

Lingapurāna, II. 4, 39-90.

1423

अष्टमात् षोडशाब्दाद्धार्य चक्रादिभूषणम् ।
प्रतप्तैरङ्कनं पश्चात्सदा वा भूषणं स्त्रियः ॥

cited as from *Vasistha Smrti* in *SR*, p 54

1424 *Visnu Smṛti*, chs 65-67

The *Āgamas'* impact on Vaisnavism seems to have become significant only from the time of Rāmānuja. The earlier attitudes may perhaps be due to the *Brahmasūtra* discussion on the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* and the stand of Śaṅkara and Bhāskara that this *Āgama* is unacceptable in part Yāmuna's rejoinder eased the position After Rāmānuja incorporated their doctrines in his *Gadyatraya,* they came to occupy a position of unquestioned authority. But the *Āgamas* have not influenced Vaisnava tradition to such an extent as to make it conform extensively to their ideals and practices.

Rāmānuja also wrote the *Nitya* on the way of worshipping God every day at home. It is based on the *Pāñcarātra.* Though the *Vaikhānasa* also has preseribed a daily routine, it is intended only for the followers of the *Vaikhānasa-sūtras.*[1425] Hence, following the lines laid down by Rāmānuja, his immediate disciples, Śrīvatsāṅkamiśra and Śrīraṅganārayana, brought forth their own manuals They were followed by Parāśara-bhatta, Nañjiyar, Nārāyana-muni, Vedānta-deśika, Varavara-muni and others. Works on *āhnika* were written by several writers in later periods.

The fivefold division of the daily routine (*pañca kāla-prakriyā*) forms the basis of these works Till recently there were many Śrīvaisnavas who scrupulously carried out this routine. That is not the case now

The indispensable qualification for being a Vaisnava is wearing the *ūrdhva-pundra* The marks which Hindu men and women wear on their foreheads are known as *puṇḍras.* They may be vertical (*ūrdhva*), horizontal (*tiryak*) or circular (*vartula*).

1425. *PR*, p 101.

The Vaisnava tradition enjoins the vertical variety, on the authority of the *Vedas*. Vide :

> धृतोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रः कृतचक्रधारी विष्णुं परं ध्यायति यो महात्मा ।
> स्वरेण मन्त्रेण सदा हृदिस्थितं परात्परं यन्महतो महान्तम् ॥
>
> *Kathaśākhā*, cited in *SR*, p. 61.

The *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* is claimed to keep away evil spirits[1426] It must be worn to ensure purity, while offering *sandhyā* prayers, doing *homa*, worshipping God, studying the *Vedas* and such other religious activities[1427] Otherwise, they will be futile[1428]

The material used for the *puṇḍra* is white mud;[1429] sandal and some other things, recommended in different contexts, are held to apply only to particular persons[1430] The white mud should be taken from only select spots like Śrīraṅgam, Veṅkaṭādri, Śrīmuṣṇam, Tirunārāyaṇapuram, Vṛṣabhādri (Tirumāliruñśolai), banks of rivers, ant-hills, the areas where *tulaśī* grows and holy places[1431]

The *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* has to start at the tip of the nose and rise upward in parallel columns with some space in between them, where a red or yellow vertical line is drawn with the help

1426 Vide *PR* p 54 citing *PārameṣṭhyaS* Cf *PārS.* III. 11, 10, 21; *IS* III. 296-317

1427 *SR* p 64 citing from *Pārameṣṭhya* and *SKS Brahma* Quotations from the latter are not found in the printed text

1428. *Vṛddha-hārīta-smṛti* II 64-65, Cf *SR* p 68

1429 *SR* pp 68-69

1430 *SR* p 66 The *SKS Brahma* passage cited is not found in the printed text.

1431 Passages cited in *SR*, pp 68-69 Cf

> समागतात् स्वप्नमुखेन विप्रपत्यौ परित्राणधुरीणवीक्षणात् ।
> अवाप योगी निशि वेङ्कटेश्वरात् स मृत्तिकाकुण्डमकुण्ठवैभवः ।
>
> *Divyasūricarita*, III, 17.

of a powder made of turmeric and other ingredients[1432] and called '*Śrīcūrna*'.

Several opinions are recorded about the shape of the *ūrdhva-pundra*. It may be of the form of flame, the leaf of the bamboo, a flower bud and Visnu's foot or feet and so on,[1433] and each form is said to achieve a specific purpose. But the practice among Śrīvaisnavas is to have it in the form of the divine foot or feet[1434] However, the two sects, Vadakalai and Tenkalai, have chosen to adopt slightly different forms of the *pundra*. As a rule, red-coloured Śrīcūrna is worn by both, but some of the former use the yellow colour

Vedāntadeśika discusses an interesting question about the form of the *pundra*. On the idols of God in temples, the *pundra* is in the form of a flame He says that the same form should not be used by men, for whom the form is that of *Haripāda*. If they try to imitate the Lord in this, will they seek to follow His example in other matters as well?

अन्यथा भगवदनुष्ठितगोपकन्योन्मादनस्वकुलविनाशनबुद्ध-समयप्रवर्तनादेरपि प्रसङ्गात् । अतो न स्वामिकृत सर्व भृत्येनाप्याचरणीयम् ।.........किं चालङ्करणरूपतया हि भगवतस्तद्धारणं; तत्र शोभैव प्रधानभूतेति यथा शोभाभिमानस्तथैव कुर्वन्तीति किं विरुध्यते ?

SR p 73

The number must be twelve including one in the forehead[1435] The others are to be put on specified parts of the body.[1436]

1432 *KA* XXXVIII 9 19-20 Cf *SA* LXV 126b

1433 *KA* XXXVIII 9, 10, *SR* pp 72-73

1434 Vide

श्रुत्यादिविहितहरिपादादिसंस्थानमेव
भागवतैरुपादेयमिति स्थितम् ।

SR. p. 73.

1435. *SR* p 76.

1436 Passages cited from various sources in *SR*, pp 73-75. Also see *KA*, XXXVIII. 11-20, and *IS*. XI. 292-320.

There appears to be a somewhat weaker sanction for wearing only four.[1437] The *Pāñcarātra* enjoins the uttering of the twelve names of Viṣṇu, when putting them on, while the *Vaikhānasa* prescribes specific *mantras* instead [1438]

Putting the *ūrdhva pundra* on the idols in the temples is authorised, as well as on wells, *mantapas*, horses, elephants and vehicles, on the vessels used for worship, flags and other objects belonging to the temple [1439] At the entrance to houses, the *puṇḍra* used to be carved on doors or painted on a plank fixed to the top of the door Here there would be additional figures—of the discus on the right, the conch on the left, Garuda to the right of the discus and Hanumān to the left of the conch. In modern days, the wearing of the *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* has practically disappeared among the younger generation

The practice of wearing the *ūrdhva-pundra* seems to be very ancient. Vedānta-deśika in his *Saccaritra-rakṣā* gives profuse citations from Vedic texts like *Katha-śākhā* and *Baudhāyana Kalpasūtras*, *purānas* like the *Matsya*, *Brahmāṇda*, *Mārkaṇdeya*, *Vasiṣtha* and *Skānda*, and *Smṛtis* like *Visnu smṛti* and *Smṛticandrikā*. The two *Āgamas* also advocated it. Vedānta-deśika quotes from the *Pārameśvara*, *Paramesthi* and *Sanatkumāra Samhitās*, though many passages cited from the *Brahma-rātra* section of the last mentioned text are from three chapters which are now lost.

A fivefold initiation known as the *pañca-saṃskāra* is enjoined on all the Śrivaiṣṇavas without distinction of caste or sex. This sacrament is intended to fit one to discharge one's duties to

1437 Vide

द्वादशै श्चतुर्भिर्वा भूषिताः स्युस्सदा द्विज ।

cited in *SR* p 76 from *PārS.*

1438 *KA* XXXV 11-18 *SKS Brahma* is cited in *SR*, p 74 But these passages are lost

1439, *KA* XXXVII. 24-27.

God and man It consists of *tāpa*, *puṇḍra nāman*, *mantra* and *ijyā*.[1440] It is also known as *samāśrayaṇa* or resorting to (the preceptor as refuge).

Tāpa (heating) refers to the marking of the left and right shoulder blades of the initiate with small heated pieces of metal of the form of the conch and the discus respectively Vedānta-deśika quotes texts from the *Vedas*, the *Pāñcarātra* and the *purāṇas* as authority for *tāpa*. Two Vedic passages cited by him are given below·

दक्षिणे तु भुजे विप्रो बिभृयाद्वै सुदर्शनम् ।
सव्ये तु शङ्खं बिभृयादिति ब्रह्मविदो विदुः ॥

(from *Mahopaniṣad* as in *SR*. p. 43)

(Those who have realised *Brahman* declare that the Brahmin must bear the discus on the right arm and the conch on the left.)

The second passage is :

प्र ते विष्णो अब्जचक्रे पवित्रे
जन्माम्बोधिं तर्तवे चर्षणीन्द्राः
मूले बाह्वोर्दधते

(*Bāṣkala Saṁhitā* as in *SR* p 93)

(O Viṣṇu, the learned have on the upper part of their arms the sanctifying conch and discus in order to cross over the ocean of worldly existence).

Another Vedic text cited by Vedānta-deśika declares· "He who bears on his body the mark of the heated discus of the omnipresent Viṣṇu which gives security to the army of the

1440. Vide·

तापः पुण्ड्रस्तथा नाम मन्त्रो यागश्च पञ्चमः

JS XXI, 233.

gods, goes to the place which is devoid of misery, shaking off the sins—the place which the recluses who are without attachment, attain " It is as follous :

चक्रं बिभर्ति वपुषा अभितप्तं
बलं देवानाममितस्य विष्णोः ।
स एति नाकं दुरिता विधूय
प्रयान्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः ॥

The word translated as 'on his body' is '*vapuṣā*', the instrumental form of '*vapus*' meaning 'body'. There is nothing against taking it to mean " the upper part of the right arm " which will be in consonance with other texts and hoary traditions Those who do not have their bodies marked by the heated discus cannot exhaust the *karmas* (i.e., effects of their past actions). which condition is a necessary preliminary to salvation [1441]

Another Vedic passage testifies to ancient sages bearing on their bodies the marks of all divine weapons:

दधतेऽन्ये पुराणाः
लिङ्गान्यङ्गे तावकान्यर्पयन्ति ।
(quoted in *SR*. p 48 as from *Bāṣkala-saṁhitā*)

The marks (*lingas*) mentioned here refer to those of discus, conch mace, sword and bow, the five weapons of Visnu. They are believed to have been worn on the right and left arms, the forehead, the head and the heart respectively. Now only the first two are worn

Instead of marking the shoulders by *tāpa* with the marks of discus and conch, mud and sandal paste are used for the purpose

1441 The passage with the word '*vapusā*' is quoted in *SR* p 43 as from *Rgveda-khila* The text denying the exhaustion of *karmas* is *RV*. IX. 83. 1. Cf. *SR*. p 43.

by Vaisṇavas belonging to schools other than that of Rāmānuja[1442] The scriptural text from the *Ṛgveda-khila* mentioned above states: *bibharti vapuṣā abhitaptam* This clearly envisages *tāpa*.

Obviously, this sacrament is intended to purify the human body and render it fit for service to God. Fire is regarded as a more effective purifier than water[1443]—particularly, 'fire' in the heated symbols of Visnu or His weapons. Such marks on the body render it fit for any religious act that the Vaiṣṇava has to do for pleasing God

The *ācārya* officiating in this sacrament has been accused of cruelty. He hurts the body of the disciple only for a noble purpose. He must be likened to the surgeon who uses sharp instruments to operate on the patients. Parents again punish their children severely to induce them to be good, studious and industrious: this is done out of love[1444] Again, in certain regions branding is a remedy for evil or the means of winning good luck Certain diseases are treated in Saurāṣṭra by branding with a heated iron rod below the affected part of the body. In Mithilā, the mother-in law and others apply the

1442 Vallabha's system prescribes the use of sandal paste Pure mud is required to be used on the occasion of offering worship (*Tattva-dīpa*, II 242a)

1443 Vide

तीर्थोदकं च वह्निश्च नान्यतः शुद्धिमर्हतः ।

Uttara-rāma-carita, I 13b

The potency of fire is thus set out

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात् कुरुते यथा ।

Bh, G IV. 37.

Sudarśana has the powers of the sun, the moon and fire. See *AhS.* XXIV 1.

1444. *Ātma-tattva-viveka* p. 873

flame of a lamp to the knee of the newly wedded bride to ensure good fortune for her [1445]

The law-books of Vrddha Hārīta, Śāṇdilya and Vasistha and the *Visnudharmottara* enjoin this practice. Śāndilya says that one's utensils and cattle are to be given the marks of the conch and the discus [1446] Children are to be adorned on the fifth day after birth with ornaments having the symbols of conch and discus [1447]

Those who oppose the sacrament of *tāpa* rely on a passage in a *Śrauta-sūtra* which frowns on scars from wounds in the body caused in three ways. The three ways [1448] are taken to be through the bow-string, engaging in battles or involvement in scuffles in gambling Such activities must be regarded as forbidden or allowed only to the extent at which no scars are received or given. But they are claimed to refer to wearing the emblems of Brahmā Viṣṇu or Rudra so as to cause scars. Such an interpretation is untenable: it goes against the authority of the *Vedas*, epics, *Āgamas* and the bulk of the *Smrtis*. The few *Smrti* texts quoted against the sacrament [1449] cannot avail

1445 Vide Śrīnivāsācārya's commentary on *NP* 414-415

1446 *PārS* XV 962b-965a Cf *SR* p 52.

1447 *SR* p 52.

Cf स्वर्णैः पञ्चायुधं धार्यं रक्षायै पञ्चमेऽहनि ।
असिशङ्खगदाचक्रशार्ङ्गव्याघ्रनखानपि ॥

The above passage is cited as taken from Atri in *Kanṭhabhūsana*, a commentary on the *Gṛhyasūtra* (VII) by Vaidikasārvabhauma Hārita Venkatācārya.

1448. *Baudhāyana-śrauta-sūtra* (II 3) uses the word, '*atrikinah*' (one without three scars) Caland's notes identify the scars as those caused by (i) using the bow-string and taking part in wrestling, (ii) participating in gambling and (iii) trying to control elephants. This is as per Bhāvasvāmin's commentary on the *sūtra*.

1449. See *SR*. p. 41.

against this formidable corpus of authority. It should be remembered that there are references also, as already mentioned, to the practice of wearing the emblems of all the five weapons of Visnu (the conch, discus, mace, sword and bow) to get freedom from *saṁsāra* [1450]

There is no decisive evidence to show how old the ritual of *tāpa* as also the *pañca-saṁskāra* generally is It might have been originally intended as a protection against evil spirits. The new-born child used to be given a garland containing the emblems. Ear-rings of the form of the conch and the discus used to be worn by devotees of Viṣṇu In course of time, probably by 700 A D [1451] it became essential for a Vaisnava to have the *saṁskāra* In Nāthamuni's days, it must have been in vogue, though not every Vaiṣṇava of the times observed it (Wearing *ūrdhva pundra* might have become widespread earlier) After Nāthamuni, tradition records some instances of *tāpa* being administered Tirumalai Nambi administered it to his two sons-in-law[1452] and Periya Nambi to Rāmānuja [1453] After Rāmānuja the sacrament of *pañca-saṁskāra* became obligatory for all Śrivaisnavas, irrespective of caste or sex. In a passage from the

1450 *Ibid* p 49. See also fn 1447

1451 *Tāpa* is referred to by the Āzhvārs See *Tiruppallāndu* 7 and *Periyāzhvār Tirumozhi*, V 4 1

1452, *Yatirāja-vaibhava*, 3

1453 The theory that S'rīsailapūrṇa otherwise called Tirumalai Nambi, administered this is against tradition It goes also against *Yatirāja-vaibhava* (8) where it is stated

श्रीशैलपूर्णोऽप्यथ भूतपुर्या-
मागम्य वीक्ष्याङ्कृतभागिनेयम् ।
चकार रक्षार्थरथाङ्गशङ्ख-
चिह्नं च रामानुजनामकं च ॥

Rāmānuja as a baby is here said to have received the marks of the conch and discus for protection from him, The word used is '*raksārtha*'.

Mahābhārata quoted earlier in this book,[1454] it is declared that Brahmins, Ksatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras can engage in (ritualistic) worship of God if they are always devoted to their duties and are *krta-laksanas*, persons who have obtained marks of identity, that is, have undergone some kind of initiation. Attempts were made to interpret *laksana* as referring to the wearing of the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*) by Brahmins and the branding of shoulder blades in the case of Śūdras and women[1455] This is untenable as the word '*laksana*' which qualifies jointly and simultaneously four or five groups of persons, is made to bear one meaning when applied to one group and another meaning when applied to other groups. Though the *Kalpasūtras* do not refer to the sacrament of *tāpa*, there is Vedic sanction for Brahmins being marked by heated metal with the forms of the conch and the discus on their arms.[1456]

Though the sacrament of *pañca-saṁskāra* makes men and women of all castes qualified to perform formal worship of the icons of God, not every one can do so in the temple. The right is restricted to those who get initiation[1457] At home also, not all perform the worship: it is usually done by the eldest male member of the family Though women are eligible, normally they do not do it, in spite of *tāntrika mantras* being available to them in the place of Vedic *mantras*.

Seventyfour preceptors or *ācārya-purusas*, also called *simhāsanādhipatis* or 'occupants of the (spiritual) throne', are said to have been entrusted by Rāmānuja with the duty of administering the sacrament of *pañca-saṁskara*. The *Yatirāja-vaibhava* (103) and the *Guruparaṁparās* refer to this. But there does not seem to be any written evidence to show that the

1454. *Mbh. Bhīsma*, LXVI 39-40 quoted in p 137

1455. *SR* p 55

1456 *Bāṣkala Śākhā* text queted in p. 414 as from *SR*. p. 43.

1457. *JS*. XVI-XVIII.

right to give the fivefold initiation is restricted only to the 74 and their successors. As of today, only a few of the successors exercise this privilege, others having given it up for some reason or other.

The ritual of initiation is begun by the *ācārya* himself with a *homa* in the sacred fire. The *Puruṣa-sūkta*, *Śrī-sūkta* and other sacred texts are recited. Metallic representations of the conch and discus are 'bathed' ceremonially and then heated in the fire. They are then applied by the *ācārya* to the shoulder blades of the disciple, who also is given the *puṇḍra*. The teaching of three *mantras*—the *mūla-mantra* (i.e., the *aṣṭākṣara*), the *dvaya* and the *caramaśloka* (i.e., *Gītā*, XVIII 66)—constitutes the *saṁskāra* of mantra. As for *ijyā*, the disciple is instructed in the ritual of worshipping God at home. He is then given a name by which he can regard himself as a devotee of God and His devotees.[1458] The occasion is utilised also to teach the disciple the significance of the epics, the *Gītā* and some other sacred texts and instruct him on how to lead his life as a Śrīvaiṣṇava.

The *ācāryas* include some ascetics also. This has given rise to a practical difficulty. *Sannyāsins* are prohibited from offering oblations in the fire. Hence the *homa* required for the sacrament has to be performed by some *gṛhastha* attached to the *sannyāsin* who however applies the heated metal pieces to the shoulder blades of the initiates. For some time past, the tendency has been to seek initiation at the hands of *sannyāsins*

1458 It is stated that the *saṁskāra* of *nāman* is concerned with how one describes oneself to others. One must add the word '*dāsa*' (or 'servant') to one's name to indicate that one is a servant of God and His devotees. Vide

एकान्ती व्यपदेष्टव्यो नैव ग्रामकुलादिभिः ।
विष्णुना व्यपदेष्टव्यस्तस्य सर्वं स एव हि ॥

This stanza is cited in *RTS* I p. 507, as from *ViS*, in the printed text of which however, it is not found.

presiding over mutts, and the disciples of *ācārya-puruṣas* who are householders, are dwindling.

One group of Vaiṣṇavas, it may be noted, do not receive *pañca-saṁskāra*. The *Vaikhānasas* claim that they are the children of the Lord and that they do not need the sacrament or preceptors. Other Vaisnavas are distinguished from non-Vaisnavas mentally, verbally and physically. They engage in the distinctive mental activity of *bhūtaśuddhi* and the verbal activity of *japa* in the *cakrābjamaṇḍala* and are subjected to being marked on the body by the metallic emblems of the conch and discus of the Lord. The *Vaikhānasas* reject the three *mantras* taught to other Vaisnavas by their preceptors. *Japa* in the *cakrābjamaṇḍala* is meant only for those who follow the *Pāñcarātra* exclusively and without reference to the *Kalpasūtras*. As for *tāpa*, the *Vaikhānasas* claim that in their families the foetus in the womb gets the marks of the conch and the discus in the eighth month of the pregnancy of the mother when the ritual of *Visnubali* is performed. Nārāyana Himself is said to give the marks to the foetus Thus the followers of the *Vaikhānasa-sūtras* claim to be *Garbha-Vaisnavas*, that is, Vaiṣnavas even in the wombs of their mothers.[1459]

In spite of these differences between the two *Āgamas*, it may be noted that, according to both, the Vaisnava has to bear the marks of the conch and the discus It should also be remembered that this *samskāra* has for long been considered an

1459 Vide

मद्भक्तियुक्तस्य मदौरसस्य
निषेककर्मादिविराजितस्य ।
वैखानसस्य न तप्तमुद्रा
न मन्त्रदीक्षा न गुरुर्मया विना ॥

KA. XXXVI, 54.

Cf. *Ibid*. XXXVI, 42-49, and *Vaikhānasa Gṛhya-sūtra*, III. 13.

essential qualification for conducting worship and preparing food both at home and in temples. Even women must be thus qualified before they can handle household vessels, bring water or cook and serve food The pious would not accept even a cup of water from one who had not undergone the *saṁskāra*, though the strict observance of this rule is no longer common.

The daily routine has been prescribed for the Vaisnava who has undergone *pañca-saṁskāra* An immediate disciple of Rāmānuja—known as Vaṅgi Vaṁśeśvara and Śrīranga-nārāyaṇācārya—has written a manual, *Āhnika kārikā*, based on *pañca-kāla-prakriyā*.[1460] It should be deemed an authentic account of Rāmānuja's views

The round of daily religious exercises differs in some essential particulars in the *Pāñcarātra* and Vedic traditions. The latter enjoins the *Gāyatrī-japa*[1461] thrice daily. The *Pāñcarātra* prescribes the *japa* of *Visnu-mantras* During *japa*, Visnu is to be meditated as being present in tha sun's disc, and He is to be worshipped with specific names. The *mantra* for the *japa* in the morning is *Visnu-Gāyatrī*, the *devatā* being Viṣṇu; at midday, it is *dvādaśākṣara* invoking Mahā-visṇu; and in the evening, it is *astāksara*, the Deity being Sadā-visṇu.[1462]

Vedānta Deśika warns against hastily discarding Vedic practices and adopting in their place directions from *Pāñcarātra* texts except on very strong grounds. He points out that followers of Rāmānuja's teachings have performed marriages, *upanayana* and other sacraments and rituals in accordance with the *Sūtras* to which they owe allegiance. Further, all know that Rāmānuja's preceptors like Periya Nambi performed sacrifices and other rituals according to their *Sūtras*. Hence those intent

1460 *Āhnika-kārikā*, 35

1461. *RV*. III. 62 10,

1462. *SKS*. *Brahma*, V. 94-106.

on following the precepts and practices of Rāmānuja and his disciples should not adopt for rituals and ceremonies the *mantras* enjoined in particular *Pāñcarātra saṁhitās*.[1463] The *Āhnika-kārikā* enjoins *homa* and other rituals of the kind mentioned in *Kalpa-sūtras*.[1464] In this context, the question arises as to accepting the *Pāñcarātra* injunctions about rituals involving the slaughter of animals. King Uparicara Vasu is said to have offered as victim in a sacrifice the figure of an animal made of the flour of wild grains.[1465] Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of the gods, accepted this view after initial opposition.[1466] The *Pāñcarātra* is held to be Vasu's authority. The *Dvaitins*, influenced by the humane considerateness of the *Pāñcarātra*, recommend sacrifices of this kind [1467] The *Viśiṣṭādvaitins*, though far more influenced by the *Pāñcarātra*, argue that a Vedic ritual, if obligatory or required on specific occasions, must not be given up or modified [1468]

The offering of *arghya* to the sun during *sandhyā* prayers is cited as a ritual involving *hiṁsā*, as it brings about the death of the demons impeding the progress of the sun [1469] One has to turn round oneself in the clockwise direction to get rid of the sin of killing But the killing of an animal as a victim in a sacrifice is not deemed a sin *Hiṁsā* or causing injury is an act which leads to evil

अनर्थप्रापकव्यापारत्वं हिंसालक्षणम् । [1470]

1463 *RTS* II, 444-5 See also *PR* p 130

1464 *Āhnika-kārika*, 83-87

1465 *Mbh*, *Śānti*, CCCXLIV 11

1466. *Ibid* 18 20, 63, 64

1467 The Dvaitins' views are set out in the *Piṣṭa-paśu-mīmāmsā* of Vijayīndra

1468 *RTS* II 444-5

1469 *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* II 1, 2

1470. Vedānta Deśika's *Tātparya-candrikā* on Rāmānuja's *Gītābhāṣya*, II. 19.

In this sense, there is no *hiṁsā* in sacrifices, as the victims attain to a better state after death. Rāmānuja observes:

> अतिशयिताभ्युदयसाधनभूतो व्यापारोऽल्पदुःखदोऽपि
> न हिंसा प्रत्युत रक्षणमेव ।
>
> *Śrībhāsya* III 1.25.

Therefore the ritual killing of animals is meritorious. It inflicts beneficial injury like surgery:

> चिकित्सके च तादात्विकाल्पदुःखकारिणमपि रक्षकमेव
> वदन्ति, पूजयन्ति च तज्ज्ञाः ।
>
> *Śrībhāṣya*, IV. 1.25.

(Cf. *Adhikaraṇasārāvali*, 284-6, of Vedanta Deśika on *ibid*)

As regards the *japa* of any *mantra*, it can be verbal, silent or mental, securing protection from evil spirits, accomplishing desired objectives and helping in the attainment of *moksa* respectively.[1471] The rosary, *aksa-sūtra*, is to be used for counting the number of repetitions.[1472] Interruptions to *japa* are not generally permissible, but the arrival of a devotee of the Lord requires a break in it.[1473] Devotion to the devotees of God is stressed so much.

1471 *JS* XIV 3-5a

1472 *LT.* XXXIX 36-47. The use of the rosary and selection of materials for it are stated here. Cf *JS* XIV 5-18.

1473 Vide

> जपमध्ये गुरुर्वापि वैष्णवो यःसमागतः ।
> सम्भाषणादिपूजां तु तस्य कृत्वानुमान्य च ॥
>
> अनुश्राव्य ततः कृत्वा जपशेषं समाहितः
> सर्वस्य प्रभवो यस्माद्विष्णुपादाश्रया नराः
>
> *PR.* pp. 129-30.

Besides *japa*, four other rites are enjoined by the *Pāñcarātra*—'sacrifice', libation, ritual bath and offering food to Brahmins. Collectively, the five are known as *puraścarana* 1474 They are needed for securing full spiritual power through *mantras*. Among the prescribed *mantras* are the *Visnu-gāyatrī*, the *Sāvitrī*, *Sudarśana-mantra*, *Bīja-mantra*, *Astra mantra*, the *Bhūta-śuddhi mantras*, *Śakti-mantra*, *Pañcopanisan-mantra*, *Vaiṣṇava mantras* generally and many others Of these, only a few are used in *japa* and for attaining specific objectives. The *Sāvitrī* is obligatory for every one qualified to study the *Vedas*. Among the *Vaiṣṇava mantras*, the *pranava*, *saḍaksara*, *aṣṭākṣara*, *dvādaśākṣara* and *Jitante* are described as *vyāpaka*. The *astāksara* is universally enjoined by *Vaisnava* tradition in addition to the *Gāyatrī* 1475 Vide:

स्वसंहितोक्तनिष्ठामात्रेण यथार्हं सर्वेषां पञ्चकालधर्म-
प्राप्तेः, अत एव हि भाष्यकाराणां शिष्याः प्रशिष्याश्च
श्रीमदष्टाक्षरेण समाराधनं प्रपञ्चयन्तः पञ्चकाल-
कल्पनयैव दिनचर्यामुपदिदिशुः ।

PR p 10 (Cf *VK*. p. 108).

Worship of God is obligatory for everyone It is of two kinds—in the temple and at home The former known as *parārtha-yajana* (worship for the sake of others) is concerned with the consecrated idols in the temple and intended for the welfare of the community Thh *Āgamas* however suggest that '*parārtha*' means 'concerned with what is superior' or 'excellent'. It is like the sun, while worship at home is like a domestic lamp

परार्थः सूर्यसदृशः स्वार्थस्तु गृहदीपवत् ।

IS. XXI. 508a.

1474. This is the view only of the followers of the *Pāñcarātra*

1475 *Visnu-gāyatrī* is a *vaidika-tāntrika mantra* Vide *SKS*. *Brahma*, IV. 71. It is adopted in *Vaikhānasa* texts also. See *VK* pp. 28, 89

It is also declared that *parārtha*[1476] worship leads to final liberation.

परार्थ उत्कृष्टो मोक्षवाचकः ।

(*Arcanā-navanīta*).

This is not to imply however that domestic worship, *svārtha-yajana*, can be dispensed with

In temples regulated by the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*, only the followers of the *Vaikhānasa Kalpasūtras* can conduct worship. But in temples adopting the *Pāñcarātra Āgama*, any *Vaisnava* Brahmin following any *Kalpasūtra* can perform the *ārādhana*. But the primary eligibility is said to be with those who are descendants of the Brahmins who were taught the doctrines by God and whose families have been attending to worship in temples.[1477] Special initiation is necessary for these as well as others who have only secondary eligibility[1478] Men and women of all castes can and must worship God at home after receiving *pañca-saṁskāra*.[1479]

1476 '*Para*' is taken in the sense of 'superior' Domestic worship is *svārtha* *SprS* LIII 152-155, *IS* XXI 509a

1477 *SA* XXII 10-15

1478 Vide

परार्थयजनं कुर्युर्विप्रा मुख्यानुकल्पयोः ।
नैवाधिकारिणो गौणा दीक्षासंस्कारवर्जिताः ॥

SS II 11

Cf *IS* XXI 506-511, *PaS* IV 1 8

1479 *Paus* I 35, 36a, *Viśvāmitra S* III. 27 Vide also

यो मोहादथवालस्यादकृत्वा देवतार्चनम् ।
भुङ्क्ते स याति नरकान् सूकरेष्वपि जायते ॥

(Cited in *PR* p 66, Adyar edition, from *Yogayājñavalkya*) This must not be taken to mean everyone in a family should offer worship, but that domestic worship should never be given up.

Worship at home is conducted with reference to one or more small icons or to a stone called *sālagrāma* in which the Lord is believed to be specially present.[1480] The latter is preferred as the worship of icons at home requires time and involves strain Household icons should be made of metals like silver or copper or of certain other specified materials [1481] They should be not less than six inches in height.[1482] They require formal consecration.

The *sālagrāma* is found in the river Gaṇḍaki when it flows through Nepal. As '*sāla*,' means a kind of fish and '*grāma*' a dwelling place, the compound word means the place where the *sāla* kind of fish reside. Vide:

तालव्यो नृपझषयोः शालः

(Bhānuji's commentary on *Nāmalingānuśāsana* II. 2. 37).

and :

समौ संवसथग्रामौ

(*Ibid* II. 3. 19)

But the exact significance of this name is not known, and it is sometimes written as '*sāligrāma*'. It is to be treated as *svayaṁvyakta* [1483] According to a traditional account,[1484] the river, Gaṇḍaki, cursed the gods who in turn cursed it to become a black, dull stream. The Lord (Viṣṇu) reconciled the two by decreeing that two Brahmins, Grāha and Mātanga, should come to the river on account of a curse and die there, after which they would get *mokṣa*. Insects, born out of their

1480. *SA* LXXI, 3.

1481. *PauS.* I 35-38a ; *ViśvāmitraS* III. 37.

1482. *ViS.* X. 58-61.

1483. *IS.* XX, 34b-15a See also *PāS*, III. 32. The name occurs as '*sālagrāva*' in *SprS* XXIX. 114b.

1484. *Brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa*, XIX.

marrow and fat, would convert the water into *vajra*-like hard stones, thus redeeming the river from the curse. These are the *sālagrāma* stones.

They are distinctive in having one or more marks of Viṣṇu's discus, conch, club or other weapons. Vide:

चक्राङ्कितं हरेश्चापि शालग्रामलक्षणम्

(*Raṇavīra-bhakti-ratnākara*, p. 75).

The marks may be visible or subtle. From the nature and shapes of these marks, they are identified as Varāha, Matsya and other forms of God. For instance, the Varāha *sālagrāma* is said to be *ghonākṛti* [1485] while the Matsya is thus described: [1486]

वामे प्रदृश्यते रेखा मत्स्यमूर्तिः शुभप्रदा ।

As Viṣṇu is ever present there, no *pratiṣṭhā* (consecrated installation) is necessary.[1487] A donor of the *sālagrāma* will get happiness and prosperity.[1488]

For worship in the house, a group of five or six *sālagrāmas*, called a *kṣetra*, is recommended. Perhaps this is meant to be similar to the number of *beras* in temples. *Sālagrāma* worship is similar to that of temple icons.

The object of worship at home, whether *sālagrāma* or icon, may be inherited (*pūrva-puruṣa-sthāpita*), acquired from select spots (*svayaṁ gṛhīta*), installed by some one in one's house (*anya-nyasta*) or purchased (*dhana-krīta*) [1489]

In the Vaiṣṇava idea of God, many currents of thought about God, man, the world and their inter-relations meet and

1485 *Raṇavīra-bhakti-ratnākara*, p. 79.

1486. *Ibid.* p 407.

1487. *Ibid.* p. 3

1488. *Ibid.* p 9

1489. *PauS.* XXX. 84-87.

mingle. Important contributions were made by the epics, *purāṇas* and poems of the Āzhvārs. Even before Rāmānuja, Vaiṣṇavism had gained a distinct form During and after his times when the temple became very important, the influence of the *Āgamas* began to be increasingly felt, but it never became all-comprehensive.

Worship of God is also called *ārādhana* which means 'an act of pleasing'. The Vaiṣṇavas expect people to be *paramaikāntins*, those who realise that they are entirely dependent on God and therefore have no favour to ask. The descriptive term is understood in two ways: those who have decisive knowledge (*anta*) only (*eka*) about God (*parama*) as the means and the goal; and those who are great (*parama*) in having decisive knowledge (*ekānta*) about God as the means and the goal. They have no other purpose to be served, seek no other god and resort to no other means Vide:—

परमश्चासौ एकान्तश्चेति परमैकान्तः, सोऽस्यास्तीति परमैकान्ती; एकत्र अन्तो निश्चयः प्राप्यतया प्रापकतया च तदुभयं संभूय परमैकान्तः, परमश्चासौ एकान्ती चेति वा समासः। तत्राप्य-नन्योपायत्वानन्यप्रयोजनत्वयोस्समुच्चयात्पारम्यम्, अनन्योपायत्वं चानन्यदेवताकत्वपर्यन्तम्।

(*PR.* p. 140).

Every Vaisnava is expected to take a resolve (*saṅkalpa*) to please God who as *Bhagavān* is possessed of six auspicious qualities and is Nārāyaṇa. Some resolve to do things which are *kainkarya*.

The procedure for worship at home is detailed in Rāmānuja's *Nitya*, which seems to be taken from the *Lakṣmī-tantra* 1490 and *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā*.1491 The instructions

1490 *LT* XXXIX.

1491. *AhS*, XXVIII.

regarding *bhūta-śuddhi*, *pañcopaniṣan-mantra*, *surabhi-mudrā*, *astra-mantra* (for keeping the offerings secure) and such other things given in the *Nitya* are taken from the *Pāñcarātra*; the influence of which is also seen in performing *hṛdyāga* or *mānasa-yāga* before performing external worship.

The recitation, however, of the compositions of the Āzhvārs and *ācāryas* during the ritual of *mantra-puṣpa* and *śāttumarai* has no precedent in the *Āgamas*. The *Nitya* of Rāmānuja and the *Āhnika-kārikā*[1492] of his disciple, Vangi Vamśeśvara, mention dance and vocal and instrumental music as part of the formal worship and direct the offering of flowers at the utterance of each of the *vyāpaka-mantras* and of each *ṛk* of the *Puruṣa-sūkta*, but they do not refer to the *mantrapuṣpa* and *śāttumarai*. The *Abhigamanasāra* of Śrīvatsāṅka-miśra, the *Nityas* of Parāśara Bhaṭṭa and Nañjīyar, the *Nitya-karma-saṅgraha* of Gṛdhrasaro-muni and the manual of Kṛṣṇa-muni[1493] are lost, and we cannot find out when and how the procedure now followed in the *ārādhana-krama* was fixed.

In regard to these and many other practices in Vaiṣṇavism in relation to the worship of God, pious persons have received them from tradition dating back to very early times, though they may not all be based on *Dharma-śāstras* or *Āgamas*. But they spring from one source of *dharma*, the good conduct of good persons.

Vide:

आचारश्चैव साधूनामात्मनस्तुष्टिरेव च

MS. II. 6.

Some of these practices may be mentioned. While most people prostrate only once, Vaiṣṇavas of the Vaḍakalai sect do

1492 *Āhnika-kārikā*, 403-7.

1493. These lost works are referred to in *PR*, II and III. See especially pp. 113, 122-5, 128, 130, 131.

it twice or four times, that is, an even number of times.[1494] In temples one should worship at the shrine of Śrī before proceeding to the shrine of the Lord One can have a special worship called *arcana* through the *arcaka* (the officiating priest) It consists of offering a specific number of times (usually 108 or 1008) saffron powder (*kunkuma*) at the feet of the *dhruva bera* of Śrī and *tulasī* leaves at the feet of the *dhruva-bera* of the Lord, to the accompaniment of the uttering of their numerous names (108 selected names or 1008 such names). The list of names is known as the *nāmāvalī*, and it is available not merely for Śrī and Viṣṇu, but also for incarnations like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Narasimha. One of the 108 names of Śrī is *Prakṛti*, and obviously it indicates the influence of *Āgama* philosophy Each name is recited like a *mantra* with the *praṇava* at the beginning. The noun is declined in the dative case and the word '*namaḥ*' (prostration) comes after it [1495] The flowers, leaves or *kunkuma* offered during *arcana* is at the feet of the icon [1496] Fruit, coconuts and betel leaves with areca nuts are then held before the Deity for acceptance. Burning camphor is waved three times from the foot to the head of the Deity [1497] evidently in

1494 Vide

द्विधा प्रदक्षिणं कुर्यात्प्रणामं च तथाविधम् ।
यतस्समो हि भगवान् देवस्सर्वस्य वै हरिः ॥

PārS VI 416

Cf *IS*, XII 21

,1495.

प्रैंणवादि नमोऽन्तेन पृथङ्नामुदीरयन् ।

SA LX. 50a

1496,

हरिपादार्चनादन्यत्र किञ्चित्परमं हितम् ।

PārS. II. 31b

1497. *JS* IV, 214,

order to enable the worshippers to get a good view and to give them the assurance of divine blessing. But the *arcana* is also part of the temple routine which includes the offering of water for *arghya* (washing the hands), *pādya* (washing the feet), *ācamanīya* (sipping) and other *upacāras* and the use of water in bathing the icons. Such water acquires sanctity and is distributed to the worshippers after it becomes available. The *śathāri* (which contains a representation in metal of the two feet of the Deity) in then placed on the heads of the devotees in token of divine acceptance of their services and devotion. The flowers and *tulasī* leaves used for *arcana* are also distributed to the devotees Other features of temple worship like special offerings or periodical *abhisekas* (ceremonial baths) can be offered to particular deities on behalf of devotees at their request,[1498] as in the case of *arcana*.

It is enjoined that worshippers at the shrine should stand to the right of the Deity,[1499] but the direction is not observed. Another injunction not followed is that the worshippers should leave the shrine walking backwards without turning their backs to the Deity [1500] The prescribed circumambulation of the shrines however is carried out.

The name of Śrī's shrine is *tāyār sannidhi* in Tamil,[1501] which indicates that She is the Universal Mother. The word, '*sannidhi*', to denote a shrine, implies the presence there at all times (of the Deity) Indeed, the entire temple is permeated in a special way by the divine presence The mandate is therefore given that after passing the *dvaja-sthambha* one should

1498. Important temples arrange for such services The Śrinivāsa temple at Tirumalai is unique in having such services practically every day throughout the year

1499. *PR* p. 132

1500. *PārS* IX. 66.

1501. In Śiva temples, the goddess is called '*Amman*' in Tamil.

not bow or prostrate to any one other than the Deity, not even to kings and preceptors.[1502]

At the time of festivals or processions of the Deity, every individual must try to render some kind of service. This takes precedence over all other work including the performance of *sandhyā-vandana* which should be postponed, if due when the processional idol is taken out. Similarly, the general rule that silence be observed during the *mahā pradosa*[1503] (that is, the evening having the *trayodaśī tithi*), is not to be followed by those who have to render *vācika-kaiṅkarya* (verbal service) by reciting the *Divya-prabandha* or the *Vedas*. This code of behaviour has been clearly inspired by the sense of a primary obligation to render service to the *arcā* form of God, deeming it more important than any other duty whatsoever.

The concept of service has influenced even the choice of terms to describe worship of God. Those who carry out formal worship are said to do *ārādhana*, an act which pleases, and visiting the temple is taken to provide an occasion for *sevā* (service). Philosophically, the self is regarded as a *śeṣa* (subordinate) to the Lord and hence a servant (*sevaka* or *kiṅkara*) to Him: what he does is *kaiṅkarya* (service). The same attitude is extended to characterise his relations with his preceptor, parents, elders, relatives and other Vaiṣṇavas. In all these cases, he is said to render *sevā* when he shows his regard and respect or even prostrates himself.

1502 Vide

परेष्वाभिवादनम् ।
गुरौ मौनं निजस्तोत्रं देवतानिन्दनं तथा ॥

PR. p 136.

1503. Vide: *PR*. p. 144 where the *Kālavidhāna* and *Smṛtyarnava* are cited

Festivals in the temples are deemed occasions of celebration at home where feasts are prepared. Some arrange for public feeding on a large scale on such occasions. Contributions are given for conducting specific festivals in temples when food preparations on a large scale are offered to God and distributed to devotees. Gifts in cash and kind are also given to *arcakas* and others rendering service in temples. Some persons create endowments out of money, landed property etc to yield income for conducting the temple festivals in which they are interested Money is poured every day into the *hundis* of temples The vast daily collections at the Tirumalai temple of which the annual income runs into several crores from voluntary contributions, serve as a correct index of the fervent devotion of the people.

The epics and *purānas* no doubt have nurtured this devotion. But it is the *Agamas* that have played a notable role in directing this devotion to temples The daily routine, the official and private offerings and the festivals at temples are governed by the *Āgamas*. A study of South Indian temples, particularly that at Śrīraṅgam, reveals the *Āgama* influence on temples and society.

As regards domestic worship, it has to be offered twice every day, whether to a consecrated icon or a *sālagrāma* But it is usually performed only once, in the morning The procedure is the same in the case of both the icon and the *sālagrāma* If, for unavoidable reasons, *ārādhana* could not be carried out, at least the food prepared at home should be formally offered to the Deity. This can be done even by ladies It is also usual for a small lamp fed by ghee or oil to be kept near the domestic shrine and lighted both in the morning and the evening and kept burning for some time After the conclusion of the worship, holy water is first taken by the person who did the *ārādhana* and then distributed by him to others

In one detail connected with the worship, members of the Teṅgalai sect (except for a few in Andhra) differ from others:

they do not ring the bell during *ārādhana*. Sometimes this is explained as due to the fact that the person doing the *ārādhana* has to use his left hand to ring the bell, as the right hand has to make the offerings.

Usually, *ācamana* (ceremonial sipping of water) has to be performed at the commencement of a religious act. This is forbidden before and after taking the holy water

Vide.

आम्रेक्षुदण्डताम्बूलचर्वणे सोमपानके नाद्यान्ताचमन स्मृतम् ।
भगवान् पवित्रं वासुदेवः पवित्रं तत्पादौ पवित्रं तत्पादोदकं पवित्रं
तत्पाने आचमनं यथा यथा हि सोमे ॥

Ācamana-nirnaya cited in *P R* p. 133

Another prohibition is in regard to accepting food from a house where Visnu is not worshipped in *arcā* form :

केशवार्चा गृहे यस्य न तिष्ठति महीपते ।
तस्यान्नं नैव भोक्तव्यमभक्ष्येण समं हि तत् ॥

cited in *P R.* p 115

It is mandatory to take only the food offered to God during *ārādhana*. Accepting such food is *anu-yāga*, as it is an act pleasing to God, being regarded as part of worship and carried out while thinking about Him. Except recluses, all are to take food twice a day [1504]

In regard to *pariṣecana*, the ceremonial sprinkling of water round the dining leaf followed by taking a small quantity of water from the palm of the right hand to the accompaniment of uttering a *mantra*, it is enjoined in some texts that it is only for the cooked rice. This means that other dishes like soup and vegetables are to be served afterwards.[1505] This

1504. *KA.* XXXII 77.

1505 *Ibid.* XXXVIII, 79, 85, 86

practice is now prevalent only among the Vadakalai Vaisnavas The *Vaikhānasas* do not follow it at the present time After the *pariṣecana* the holy water used in worship (*ādhāva*) is to be taken 1506 This is also done at the end But this has not been prescribed

In the fivefold division of duties according to time, though *svādhyāya* and *yoga* find a place, they are not practised even by the extremely pious nowadays

The *Āgamas* deal with some festivals which recur annually. The Vaiṣṇavas in course of time have concentrated their devotion on Viṣṇu to the exclusion of other deities like Śiva, Gaṇeśa, Subrahmanya, Indra and Sūrya. The *Āgamas* however provide for their worship as gods forming Visnu's retinue. In fact, the worship of Gaṇeśa is enjoined before starting any ritual 1507 But the *paramaikāntin* ideal of devotion 1508 developed under the influence of the *Gītā* and the *Purānas*, did not allow consideration for other deities Thus the Vaisnavas do not observe Vināyaka-caturthī, Skanda ṣaṣṭhī or Śivarātri, nor do they visit the temples of these deities The birthdays of Āzhvārs gained importance among them Every Vaisnava household celebrates the nativity of Āndāl on Tiruvadippūram day when the moon is with the asterism Pūrvaphalgunī Some Vaiṣnava festivals like Śrīrāma navamī, Śrī Jayantī and Nrsimha Jayantī are celebrated by all Hindus.1509 The *Āgamas* deal in detail with these three celebrations

1506 Vide

अमृतोपस्तरणमसीत्याधावं प्राशयेत्बुध:

Ibid XXXVIII 89a

1507 *PauS* XXX 59

1508 See *PR* p 140

1509 Nṛsimha-Jayantī, however is not observed by the Tengalai Vaiṣnavas except for some groups in Andhra and Karnātaka.

There are differences among the Vaiṣṇavas in fixing the days for these festivals and in some minor details of observance Śrī Kṛṣṇa is said to have been born under the asterism, Rohiṇī, during the night of the eighth day of the dark fortnight in Śrāvaṇa [1510] This is the Śrī Jayantī day [1511] The *aṣṭamī* and the Rohiṇī asterism do not occur on the same day every year or extend simultaneously throughout their duration. Usually, the *tithi* and the *nakṣatra* are simultaneous only for a few hours, The *aṣṭamī* may extend for the whole day with Rohiṇī occupying a part of it, or *vice versa* In the former case, we have the Janmāṣṭamī, while the latter gives rise to the Śrī Jayantī [1512] The Kṛttikā constellation or the *saptamī* may extend for some time with the Rohiṇī and *aṣṭamī* respectively. Or Rohiṇī and *aṣṭamī* may be together when the moon rises in the dead of night. Or the day may be such that Rohiṇī prevails at midnight without having had any association with Kṛttikā earlier, though the *aṣṭamī* could have come after sunrise when *saptamī* was still continuing Or again, the *aṣṭamī* could prevail without any tinge of *saptamī* during the day, though Kṛttikā would have preceded Rohiṇī in the earlier part of the day Any one combination of these conditions permits the celebration of Kṛṣṇa's birth-day, according to the Munitravā section of the Vaḍakalai Vaiṣṇavas [1513] The *Vaikhānasas* stress the presence of *aṣṭamī* at sunrise, whether or not Kṛttikā is there at that time to be followed by Rohiṇī later in the day [1514] But many Vaiṣṇavas prefer Rohiṇī at sunrise, even if the *tithi* should happen to be *navamī* or *daśamī*

1510. *Bh P* X 3 8, *V P* V 3 7, cf *KA* XXXVIII 121,

1511 *KA* XXXVIII 114

1512. *Nāradīya-saṃhitā* XXIV 13-14

1513. Gopāla Deśika's (1750 AD) *Jayantī-nirṇaya.*

1514 *KA* XXXVIII. 114-115.

But most members of the Vadakalai sect and the Teṅkalai Vaiṣṇavas follow the *Pāñcarātra* in this matter On the Śrī Jayantī day they fast during the day and eat at night after celebrating the birth of Kṛṣṇa. *Pāñcarātra* dicta regarding *tithi* and constellations are followed in celebrating the Śrī-rāma-navami, Nṛsiṁha-Jayanti, Kṛttikādīpa, Śravaṇa-dvādaśī and other festivals.[1515] It is said that a pious and learned scholar of Kāñcī during the last century adopted *Pāñcarātra* rules completely to the exclusion of the regulations of the *Smṛtis* and wrote an *Āhnika* (or manual of daily duties) setting out his views. But the limited extent of the *Pāñcarātra* influence on Vaiṣṇavism is reflected in a section of the Munitraya group among the Vaḍakalai sect adopting *Smṛti* rules for observing the Śrī Jayantī: they fast throughout, taking a meal only next morning.

1515 *JS* XIII; *SprS.* XLIV. 12b-16a, *KA.* XVIII. 21-32a, *VK.* p. 317, *KA.* XVIII. 47-48.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

In the preceding pages, the Vaiṣṇavism of South India has been shown as being based on the *Vedas*, epics and other ancient works and as later developing under the influence of the *Purāṇas* and *Āgamas*. The variety of sources and influences makes it inevitable that the leading concepts like those relating to the *avatāra* or the *vyūha* evolved at different times in different ways There does not seem to be any uniformity in treating them. Modern scholars cannot trace these concepts definitely to any sources or chart the stages in their evolution.

Earlier in this work it has been suggested that the *Pāñcarātra* is only a revised version of the *Ekānti-dharma* which was dealt with for the first time in the *Vaikhānasa* system The *yantra* concept which could have served as a link between those of *japa* and *pratimā* did not find scope in the *Vaikhānasa* system. But it is the *pratimā* (image or icon) that occupies a place of importance in both the *Āgamas*

The *Vedas* do not seem to refer to the worship of the images of God The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* however declares that such worship is the best way of approach to God And the use of Vedic *mantras* is enjoined by both the *Vaikhānasa Sūtras* and the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*. In fact, they claim that any sacred rite performed in the holy fire is only worship of God (Viṣṇu) The Vedic ritual was thus treated as a form of worship of God. Because of this, the *Mīmāṁsakas* and other orthodox followers of *Vedas* opposed to idol worship, did not care to criticise the *Vaikhānasas*.

The *Pāñcarātra* system, however, fared diffesently. It was criticised as foreign in origin and subject to foreign influence,

for allowing worship by those not entitled to Vedic studies and evolving *Tāntrika mantras* for their use, and for using *yantra* and *mudrā*. In the course of this book, these criticisms have been met.

It may be remembered that the criticisms on the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* invite reference to the *Utpattyasaṁbhavādhikaraṇa* of the *Vedānta Sūtras*, forming the last section in the second part of the second chapter Śaṅkara approves of all the tenets and rituals of the *Pāñcarātra* except for the declaration about the 'birth' of the *jīva* or individual self (who is known in the system by the name of Saṅkarṣaṇa), this is because the *Vedas* hold the *jīva* to be uncreated Rāmānuja, as pointed out already, has effectively answered this criticism

But the question may be raised whether this section contemplates any criticism of the *Pāñcarātra*. After all, its first *Sūtra*, "*Utpattyasambhavāt*", means only "due to the impossibility of birth (or production or rise) (of something)". Here there is no reference to the *Pāñcarātra* which seems to be brought in only because some of its texts appear to speak of the creation of the *jīva* The *Sūtra* can be directed against any system opposed to the acceptance of *Brahman* as the cause of the universe It can refer to the hypothesis of inert *Sakti* being such cause, on the strength of some Upaniṣadic texts, as suggested by Madhva Though this view seems reasonable, it does not explain Rāmānuja's stand Perhaps he thought it necessary to answer the criticisms of Bhāskara and Śaṅkara against the *Pāñcarātra* He demonstrates that there is no substance in them because the *Pāñcarātra* really does not hold the *jīva* to be created. His followers uphold his line of treatment in strict adherence to the principle that the strength of a group lies in the unity maintained by the individuals therein. We may also note that Vijñānabhikṣu (who wrote extensively on *yoga*) thinks that this section refutes theories about the origination of *Brahman*—a view that may solve many difficulties.

The *Purāṇas* speak with different voices about the *Pāñcarātra* The *Visnu*, *Bhāgavata*, *Varāha*, *Brahma-vaivarta*, *Garuḍa*, *Pādma*, *Agni*, *Linga*, *Vāmana* and some others support it. But the *Kūrma*, *Vāyu*, *Parāśara*, *Sāmba* and some others attack it The contents of some *Purānas* like the *Skānda* and *Āditya* are heterogeneous. Such evidence could be neither dismissed nor readily admitted

The same diversity of opinion is found among *Kalpasūtras* and *Smrtis*. *Pāñcarātra* practices are supported by the *Kalpasūtras* of Agniveśa, Baudhāyana, Daksa and others, but condemned by Āśvalāyana and others. Similarly, the *Smṛtis* of Visṇu, Śāndilya, Vasistha, Śātātapa and Vrddha-vasiṣtha and the *Yoga-yājñavalkya* and others are in favour, while those of Hārita and Yama are against There are indecisive opinions in *Vīramitrodaya* and even in *Yoga-yājñavalkya* and the work of Śātātapa.

In this welter of conflicting opinions, the testimony of the early statements made in the *Mahābhārata* and those in the *Visnupurāṇa* and *Bhāgavata* must be taken to be of primary authority.

RĀMĀNUJA

The impact of *Vaisnava Āgamas* on the Vaisnavism of various schools, claiming a hoary antiquity and a firm basis in the *Vedas*, epics and the *Purānas*, may be seen in important features of their precepts and practices The school of Rāmānuja (1017-1137 A D) is most closely linked with the *Pāñcarātra* The *Āgama* had influenced Vaisnavism in the south even before the days of the Āzhvārs. The prevalence of *Vaikhānasa* temples in the region from an early period attests to the influence of this *Āgama* also.

The Viśistadvaita system of *Vedānta*, expounded authoritatively by Rāmānuja, has won recognition all over India. But its followers are most numerous in the region now comprising the

States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Karnataka. It has some centres in the north like Pushkar, Brindavan etc The life of the Vaiṣṇavas of the Rāmānuja school is almost uniform in all these places except for a few local variations. The temples here are regulated by either the *Pāñcarātra* or the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* They all observe the custom of reciting the songs of Āzhvārs which is a sort of universal rule among this school of Vaisnavas, though the *Āgamas* do not directly enjoin it.

In general, the cosmological speculations of the *Āgamas* have not had much impact on Viśiṣṭādvaita Vaiṣnavism though their philosophy has exerted influence on it. The religious life of these Vaisnavas has been deeply influenced by the *Pāñcarātra* Nevertheless, this influence is not all-inclusive: in several matters they prefer to follow the dicta of *Smrtis*[1516] This is evident from, to take one example, the differences of opinion, based on *Smrti* texts, in regard to fixing in the annual calendar important festivals like the Śrī Jayantī, Śrī-rāma-navamī, Nrsimha-jayanti, Śravana-dvādaśī and others

A striking feature of Vaisnavism is the growing conviction from the time of Rāmānuja onwards that it is an imperative duty to worship every day the icon in the temple or the icon or the *sālagrāma* at home. This mode of worship has gained importance as part of the *bhakti* movement. The earlier tradition of the *Upanisads* appears to have been to stress the gaining of knowledge concerning God through a life of discipline, abstract thinking and meditation Eminent sages like Vyāsa, Nārada and others, out of humanitarian zeal, sought an easier approach to God. Relying on the assurances of the Lord in the *Bhagavadgītā*,[1517] they taught *bhakti* to be the easiest as well as the surest means to realise God.

1516. Vide *SR*. p. 46. Cf. *RTS*. II 444-5; *PR*, p. 130

1517. *Bh G.* XII. 7, 10, XIII. 10 etc.

At this stage, the *Āgamas* came forward with directions for worshipping God in the finitized form of idols in temples. They too were animated by the zeal to serve humanity and help them in their troubles and afflictions. The *Vaisnava Āgamas* have made a significant contribution towards this. It is noteworthy that there are relatively more Visnu temples in Tamil Nadu than in other States.

The importance given by Rāmānuja and his followers to the worship in temples accounts for the large number of Vaisnava families living in th neighbourhood of temples in places like Tirumalai, Śrīraṅgam, Kāñcīpuram, Kumbhakonam and others. The temple festivals in these places draw large crowds year after year. On other days also, pious persons feel it an obligatory duty to make at least one visit to the temple every day and offer their services to God according to their capacity. This tendency has influenced to a considerable extent the daily life of the Vaisnavas generally and particularly in the places mentioned above and others like Tiruvallikkeṇi (in Madras city), Mannārgudi, Āzhvār Tirunagarī, Melkote (in Karnātaka) etc.

Though yogic practices are dealt with in both the *Āgamas*, stress is laid primarily on *upāsana* (worship), particularly of God in the form of idols[1518] It is declared as the means for pleasing and approaching God. Elements of *prapatti* enter into it, as it is the acknowledged means for salvation.

Music and dance are an essential part of the worship of God, particularly in temples. This receives emphasis in the *Pāñcarātra*[1519] It is also mentioned in the *Purāṇas*.[1520] Dance is not now permitted in temples, and music is confined to playing the pipe (*nādasvara*). The flute, lute etc., are now not in use.

1518 *VK* pp 507-10, *PaS*. II. 1, 1-6.

1519, *PāS* IV. 11.

1520. *Bh. P.* XI. 11-36, 14, 243 Cf. *Garuḍa-purāṇa*, CCIX. 6-9.

The four-thousand hymns of the Āzhvārs, according to tradition, were set to music by Nāthamuni But the way in which they are now recited in the temples is not musical It is easy to guess that the musical mode was lost or abandoned at some time. Among the factors contributing to this might be the feeling that concentration on music might lead to neglect of meaning and even devotional fervour, and that the recitation of the hymns in the temples would be restricted to those having musical talent and training.

Likewise the *bhajana-gosthi* or choral group singing songs in praise uf God is not in high favour in South India It seems to be just tolerated on occasions like the Dhanurmāsa (December 15-January 15) or annual festival processions. The emphasis is on service to God in temples in some capacity or other, service to devotees and passively witnessing celebrations of festivals.

MADHVA

In addition to Rāmānuja, three other teachers of South India have made substantial contributions to Vaisnavism—Madhva from Karnataka and Nimbārka and Vallabha from Andhra. All of them have been influenced by the *Pāñcarātra* and the *Purānas*. Rāmānuja differs from others in coming under the influence of Āzhvārs also Among the forms of God, these teachers give special importance to *arcā* and *vibhava* (or *avatāra*).

Msdhvacārya (1199-1277) belonged to Udupi near Mangalore. He wrote a number of works on philosophy and religion demonstrating the ultimate supremacy of Viṣṇu. His *Tantra-sāra-saṁgraha* treats in four chapters the practical aspects of Vaiṣṇavism. *Pranava* is stated to denote *Brahman* who is identical with Viṣṇu. The *Aṣṭākṣara* is the source of all *mantras* and is the most important among them.[1521] The *Sāvitrī* is said to have

1521. *Tantra-sāra-sangraha*, I. 2, 13.

sprung from the *Aṣṭākṣara* recited twice.[1522] *Nyāsa* is described for *mantras* and letters[1523] God (Viṣṇu) is to be worshipped in the *cakrābja-mandala*, the heart, mountains, water or the ground.[1524] The conch, discus and such other things are emblems of Viṣṇu who is said to have two consorts, Lakṣmī and Bhū[1525] The materials for making images, their detailed measurements and other particulars are given in Chapter III, as also the procedure for consecration. The four *vyūhas* are mentioned[1526] This work clearly shows that Madhva was closely following the *Pāñcarātra* tradition and deeply learned in the lore of *mantras*.

The *Viṣṇu-rahasya* that he often cites describes fully the worship of idols, particularly those of Viṣṇu. Idols are of two kinds, *cala* and *acala*. The former is said to be the Vaiṣṇava Brahmin

चलाचलविभेदेन प्रतिमा द्वितयं मम ।
चला तु वैष्णवो विप्रो द्विविधास्त्वचला मता ॥

Visnurahasya, X. 2.

The statement that the Vaisnava Brahmin is the *cala* form of the Lord may mean no more than that he should receive worship as if he were divine, because the worship of the devotee is pleasing to Him[1527] Since this is not made clear, a conservative interpretation would be that the text is merely eulogistic suggesting that Vaisnava Brahmins should be honourably treated.

1522 *Ibid* 14

1523 *Ibid* I 37-39a, 44, II.

1524. *Ibid* I 49

1525 *Ibid* L. 18, 19

1526 *Ibid* IV 168

1527 Vide *RTS*, I. 489-90 where a passage is cited from the *Pādmottara*

The *acala* type is of two kinds—what is *sahaja* (naturally formed) and *āhita* (consecrated). Of these, the *sahajā pratimā* may be a *tīrtha* (a sacred river like the Gaṅgā or a holy tank like that at Pushkar), a *kṣetra* (a sacred spot like Prayāga, Kāśī, Kurukṣetra or Badarī, or an idol found in the earth at such a spot) or a *śilā* (i e, a *sālagrāma* which requires no consecration before being worshipped).[1528] All are qualified to worship this form.

Worship in the temple has to be performed thrice every day.[1529] Only Brahmins are said to be capable of offering worship there.[1530] Even among them, learned though they may be, certain blemishes of character or conduct act as disqualifications.[1531]

Stress is laid on *mano-yoga*, the fervour and sincerety of devotion.[1532] Without this, observance of external formalities is a mere show. Hence worship is said to be both internal and external.[1533] The former is done with the mind, and the dangers involved in its performance by those with uncontrolled minds are vividly described.[1534] The latter is to be done with the physical body, and using wealth and other possessions for performing *homa* or extending charity.[1535]

1528. *Visnurahasya*, X. 7a-10

1529. *Ibid.* X 119

1530 Vide

द्विजैरेव हि पूज्या नान्यैः ।

Ibid. X. 136.

1531. *Ibid.* X 14b-21

1532. *Ibid* LII 43a, 49a.

1533. *Ibid*. LII 14

1534. *Ibid.* LII. 15-42a.

1535. *Ibid*. LII, 49b-64.

Though the *Visnurahasya* does not deal with the construction of temples, other important aspects of the *Pāñcarātra* are discussed and described. This may explain why Madhvācārya quotes frequently from the *Visnurahasya* and why it has enjoyed the favour of writers owing allegiance to the *Dvaita* system. But it must be different from the *Pāñcarātra* text having the same name 1536

In spite of the importance attached by the followers of Madhva to temple worship, there do not seem so be many temples governed by them The temple at Udupi is under the control of the pontiffs of eight *mathas* there, each of whom takes charge for two years in turn The idols in the mutts at places like Mantrālaya (in Kurnool district of Andhra) and Tirukkoyilūr (in Tamil Nadu) are worshipped by the ascetics there according to the *Pāñcarātra* Festivals are celebrated in the temple at Udupi with processions, but there is no chorus of Vedic chanters following the idol. The ascetic himself offers the holy water used for worship to the disciples and the congregation

The *Āhnika*, mentioned above, is informative on the daily life of the Mādhvas All acts should be undertaken only for pleasing Visnu and they form part of worship The worshipper should wear on his forehead a *tilaka* in sandal paste in the form of the *ūrdhva-pundra*.1537 Similarly, a mark in the form of the lotus must be worn on the chest, in the form of the bamboo leaf on each arm. and in the form of the flame of a lamp in other places This seems to be an attempt to reconcile the differing rules in the *Īśvara*, *Pārameṣthya* and *Nāradiya Samhitās*.1538 Curiously enough, there is no mention of the

1536 *LT* Introduction p 11 It is not however clear that a work having this name is meant here. See Schrader p. 10

1537 Madhva's *Krsnāmrta-mahārnava*, 11 227-9

pandra of the form of the Lord's foot[1539] The use of sacred mud from Śrīrangam, Dvārakā, Śrīkūrmam, Simhādri, Prayāga, Vāraha (Śrīmuṣṇam) and groves of *tulasī*, along with holy water from the worship of *sālagrāmas*, is allowed. While performing *ācamana*, the names of the four *vyūha* Deities should also be uttered along with the twelve names of Viṣṇu beginning with Keśava[1540]

The followers of Madhva observe the sacrament of *tāpa* by getting their shoulder-blades branded with the heated metal emblems of the conch and the discus It is their belief that the marks on their shoulders should not be allowed to fade out. Many impress every day with sandal paste the forms of the conch and discus as *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* not merely on the shoulder-blades but also on the chest, arms etc[1541]

The *Āhnika* details the procedure for worship and describes the *pūjā-mantapa* where it is to be performed Worship is to be offered with devotion even to Ananta, Garuda and others forming the retinue of God. After *snapana*, the *Dvādaśa-stotra* of Madhva must be recited. Vessels containing food to be offered must be placed on the *bījākṣara* of Śrī written on decorating designs made with coloured flour on the floor, and consecrated with the *mūla-mantra* The *mantras* for offering food

1538 See *PR* pp 72-3

1539 A *Brahmarātra* text cited in *SR* p 72 refers to this form.

1540 *Āhnika*, pp 16-17

1541 *Śankha-cakrāṅkana* is a *dīkṣā* which confers superiority Without it and the *ūrdhva-pundra* no undertaking yields fruits Vide

तप्तचक्रं तथा शंखं यस्या गात्रे न विद्यते ।
हव्यं कव्यं तया स्पृष्टं देवाश्च पितरोऽपि हि ॥
नैव गृह्णन्ति कुपिताः शुना स्पृष्टं यथा तथा ।

Ibid. VII, 64-65a.

consist of the names of the five vital airs in association with those of Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa. The *mūla-mantra* must be uttered for *Brahman*. The *Jitante-stotra* of five sections[1542] is to be then recited. After performing *Vaiśvadeva*, the preceptor, Brahmins and the retinue of Viṣṇu must be worshipped. After completing the worship, one must draw on the forehead a straight black line (using charcoal from the incense offered) on the *puṇḍra* of sandal paste.

Thus the *Pāñcarātra* is held in high esteem by the Mādhvas as the best among the *śāstras*.

Vide :

अन्येषामागमनां तु वक्तारोऽन्ये भवन्त्यपि ।
पाञ्चरात्रस्य कृत्स्नस्य वक्ताहं स्वयमेव हि ।
अतोऽहि सर्वशास्त्रेषु वरमेतन्निगद्यते ॥

Viṣṇurahasya, VII. 32-33*a*.

In accordance with its dictates, they use the *piṣṭa-paśu* in sacrifices. They hold that even *kāmya* rituals are to be performed without expectation of reward when they become *akāmya*, pleasing to the Lord[1543] While doing any act, particularly any act the *Veda* enjoins, one must have knowledge, devotion and detachment.[1544] Vide :

भगवद्भक्तिज्ञानवैराग्यपूर्वकं च कर्म कर्तव्यम् ।

Madhva's *Karma-nirṇaya*.

1542 The printed text, according to the followers of Rāmānuja, has six sections.

1543 Madhva's *Kṛṣṇamṛta-mahārṇava*, 234b. Cf. *Mahābhārata-tātparya-nirṇaya*, XXIX, 56.

1544. Such acts should never be given up. *Kṛṣṇamṛta-mahārṇava*, 235b.

NIMBĀRKA

Nimbārka (*circa* 1200 AD), born in Andhra and originally called Bhāskarācārya, was an ascetic reputed to be an *avatāra* of the sun-god who put down heretics. A story about his name, Nimbārka, relates a miracle. Once he played host to a Jaina ascetic with whom he was having a philosophical debate. Suddenly they realised that they had debated till the sun was about to set As neither of them could take food after sun-set he made the sun stand still in its course, asking the Jaina to wait under a *nīm* (*namba*) tree and serving food to him there Hence the name of 'Nimbārka' or 'Nimbāditya'.[1545] Niyamānandācārya was another name of his[1546]

The sect founded by him is called 'Hamsa' after the incarnation of Viṣṇu as a swan who taught the *Veda* to Brahmā.[1547] In the same form he taught the pure tradition to Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra Nimbārka received it from Nārada. His cult is known as *Sanatkumāra-Nārada-sampradāya*, Vide :

> हंसस्वरूपं सनकादिकेभ्यस्तत्त्वोपदेशाय विधाय शुद्धं
> तत्त्वं परं भागवतश्च धर्मं सत्सम्प्रदायार्थमुपादिशद्यः ।
> व्याख्यातमादौ तदद्भबोधाद्दाचार्यवर्येण हरिप्रियेण
> निम्बार्कनाम्नातिगभीरबोधं श्रीनारदानुग्रहभाजनेन ॥

(Keśava Kāśmīra-bhaṭṭa's commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā* last *śloka*)

1545 H H Wilson *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p 86 Das Gupta's *History of Indian Philosophy* (III p 399) says that he was a native of Nimba or Nimbapura in Bellary District and that he died in 1165 See P N Srinivasachary's *Bhedabheda*, p. 155 Giridhara Prapanna's *Daśaślokī-vyākhyā Laghu-mañjūṣā*, 6 says he belonged to Bṛndāvana near Delhi.

1546 Devācārya, *Siddhānta-Jāhnavī*, p 6

1547. The *Hamsa*-incarnation is mentioned in *Bh P* X 2, 40 Cf. *Ibid.* XI 4, 17. His appearance thus before Śiva (XI. 19 13) and before Brahmā (XI. 17. 3) is also mentioned.

Among the followers of Nimbārka are both householders and recluses. They are largely found in Upper India, near Mathurā and in Bengal They wear the *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* with white earth or the sandal paste offered to God with a circular black mark in the centre. They also wear a necklace of *tulasī* beads. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are worshipped by them [1548]

Nimbārka's philosophy can be described as *Svābhāvika-Bhedābheda* It makes a wonderful adjustment of conflicting metaphysical views It seems an adaptation of the tenets of the ancient thinker, Audulomi, referred to in the *Brahma-Sūtras*.[1549] It admits *dvaitādvaita* between phenomena and the noumenon and *bhedābheda* between the self and *Brahman* [1550] who is both *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* *Brahman* is the abode of auspicious qualities, free from imperfections and both the material and instrumental cause of the universe The immanent Śakti of *Brahman* is responsible for creation [1551]

It is further held that *Brahman* is Rādhā Kṛṣṇa,[1552] having a dual spiritual form made of beauty and bliss. The six *guṇas* listed by the *Pāñcarātra* are among *Brahman's* innumerable qualities, thus testifying to the influence of the *Āgama* on Nimbārka [1553] *Prapatti* is a path to *mokṣa* open to all. Self-surrender to the grace of God is the most important of its six elements [1554] Devotion to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa deepens into intense

1548 For these particulars, see H H Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p 86

1549 *Brahma-sūtras*, I 4 21 ; IV 4 6.

1550. *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol I p. 573.

1551 The *Philosophy of 'Bhedābheda'*, pp 158-9.

1552 *Ibid* p 155

1553 Vide *Laghumañjūṣā* on *Daśaślokī* p 18.

1554 Keśava Kāśmīra Bhatta's commentary on *Bh. G.*, p. 2; XVIII, 66 ; *Bhagavadgītā-tattva-prakāśikā*, XVIII. 73,

love, evoking a revelation of God's blissful nature and leading to *mokṣa* The friendship of the *gopis* should be sought [1555] *Sāyujya* or *Brahmānubhava* characterises *mokṣa* [1556]

Nimbārka wrote the *Daśaślokī*, a brief conspectus of his system, and a commentary on *Brahma sūtras* called *Vedānta-pārijāta-saurabha*. His immediate disciple, Śrīnivāsācārya, commented on it in *Vedānta-kaustubha*; which received a commentary, *Kaustubha-prabhā*, from Keśava Kāśmīra Bhatta. Devācārya explained the *Brahma-sūtras* in Nimbārka's lines in *Siddhānta jāhnavī* which has a super-commentary, *Setu*, by Sundara Bhatta Vanamālī Miśra discusses the system in detail in his *Vedānta-siddhānta saṁgraha* (also known as *Śruti siddhānta*) in seven chapters The *Bhagavadgītā* is interpreted according to Nimbārka by Keśava Kāśmīra Bhatta in *Tattva-prakāśikā*

Nimbārka holds Kṛṣṇa, associated with Rādhā, to be the Supreme Reality [1557] Hayagrīva is specially mentioned in the *Śruti-siddhāntā* [1558] The three ultimate principles, *Brahman* (Kṛṣna), *cit* (the self) and *acit* (inert matter), are real, co-eternal and both different and non-different from one another. Vide:

ब्रह्माभिन्नोऽपि क्षेत्रज्ञः स्वस्वरूपतो भिन्न एव ।

Vedānta-pārijāta-saurabha, II 1 22.

Brahman's auspicious qualities and freedom from imperfections are stressed. Vide for instance

स्वभावतोऽपास्तसमस्तदोषमशेषकल्याणगुणैकराशिम् ।
व्यूहाङ्गिनं ब्रह्म परं वरेण्यं ध्यायेम कृष्णं कमलेक्षणं हरिम् ॥

Daśaślokī 4

1555 *Cultural Heritage of India*, II p 152

1556 Vanamālī Miśra's *Vedānta-siddhanta-samgraha* (also called *Śruti-siddhānta*), II 60

1557 P N Srinivasachari's *Philosophy of Bhedābheda*, p. 158, The name 'Kṛṣṇa' is thus derived

पापं कर्षयति निर्मूलयति इति कृष्णः ।

1558 *Śruti-siddhānta*, I. 1, IV. 1

There are many similarities between the systems of Rāmānuja and Nimbārka. *Prapatti* and its elements are common to both. *Sāyujya* characterises *mokṣa*. Inert matter is of three kinds—immutable (*aprākṛta*), mutable and time[1559] *Brahman* is Viṣṇu and His body is eternal. Brahmā and Rudra are subordinate to Him. Visvaksena, Garuda and many other eternally free selves attend on Him[1560] The main purpose of His descents on the earth is only to enable His devotees to have intimate communion with Him.[1561] The term, '*māyā*', is understood an knowledge.

Vide:

माया वयुनं ज्ञानमिति निघण्टुकोशात् ।
तथा भगवद्विग्रहप्रकारोऽपि श्रुतिनिर्णीत एव ।

Keśava Kāsmira Bhatta's *Bhagavadgīlā-bhāsya*, IV. 6.

Similar views had been advanced by Rāmānuja earlier.[1562] The *Gītā's* main teaching is the doctrine of self-surrender. The above-quoted commentary thereon observes:

उपास्यस्य सर्वशरणत्वाभिधानाच्छरणागति-
परमेवं गीताशास्त्रमित्यवगम्यते ।

Ibid. XVIII. 73.

The similar views of Rāmānuja's school have been referred to earlier[1563]

1559 For the Nimbārka school see *Siddhanta-jahnavī*, p 77, and *Daśaślokī*, 3 Compare *Rahasyarakṣā* on Rāmānuja's *Śrīranga-gadyam*, p 69

त्रिगुणकालशुद्धसत्त्वरूपेण अचेतनत्रैविध्यम् ।

1560. Keśava Kāsmira Bhaṭṭa's *Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya*, p. 2

1561 *Ibid* p 3, Cf Rāmānuja's *bhāsya* on *Bh G* IV 6.

1562. *Śrībhāṣya*, I 1. 21. Durgācārya offers the same explanation on *Nirukta*, V 15 S'rīdhara interprets *māyā* as knowledge under *Bh. P*, X 8 30

1563. See also P. N. Srinivasachari's *History of Viśiṣṭādvaita*, p. 374.

Rāmānuja's methodology seems to have influenced Nimbārka, as may be seen particularly in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras.* Through Rāmānuja again, he must have come under *Pāñcarātra* influence The system is not directly mentioned by him, but he uses the word, '*vyūhāṅgin*' 1564 Similarly, Śrīnivāsācārya mentions *ṣāḍguṇya* without referring to the *Āgama.*1565 But Keśava Kāśmīra Bhaṭṭa cites passages from the texts of the system which is mentioned by name 1566 According to Vanamālī Miśra, the *Pāñcarātra* in the best among the source-books 1567 *Manu Smṛti* and other authoritative texts are based on it 1568 He refers to the four *vyūhas* 1569 Charting the course of the soul attaining release, he says that it proceeds to Aniruddha, then to Pradyumna, thence to Saṅkarṣaṇa and finally to Vāsudeva the *Paramtāman.*1570 The fivefold sacrament is described in detail and enjoined as obligatory 1571

Nimbārka and his followers accept the *Pāñcarātra* whole-heartedly He does not take pains to controvert views questioning the *Āgama's* authority or to reject the theory that the *Brahma-sūtra* section at the end of Chapter II, part 2, is against the creation of the universe by Śakti without the control of God. Śrīnivāsācārya also does not refer to these

1564 *Daśaślokī*, 4 The word is taken by the commentator Puruṣottama a pupil of Śrīnivāsācārya, to mean the four '*vyūhas*' and also several kinds of divine descents like the *puruṣāvatāra*, the *guṇāvatāra* and *līlāvatāra* Giridhara-prapanna in his commentary, *Laghu mañjūṣā*, gives a brief account

1565 *Bhagavadgītā tattva-prakāśikā*, p 2

1566 *Kaustubha-prabhā* on *Brahma-sūtras* II 4 44 In his *Tattva-prakāśikā*, under *Bh G* VII 2 and IX 30 *Sattvata-tantra* and *Śrī-sattvata* are cited *Nārada-pāñcarātra* is quoted under XVIII 73 Under X. 3, a statement is identified as found in '*Pāñcaratra-vacana*'.

1567. *Vedānta-siddhānta-sangraha*, II. 78.

1568., *Ibid* IV 81-82

1569. *Ibid.* IV. 26-33

1570. *Ibid.* II. 61-63.

1571, Puruṣottama's commentary on the *Daśaślokī.*

controversies. But Keśava Kasmira Bhaṭṭa adopts Rāmānuja's views on the matter He stresses particularly the authority of the *Mahābhārata* in the matter. There is an ingenious suggestion by him that if Vyāsa criticised the *Pāñcarātra* it must have been some other school of thought with the same name.

Nimbārka's followers however do not adopt temple worship They have implicit faith in their preceptors who are *gṛhasthas* or recluses. Perhaps the worship of idols conducted in the *maṭhas* by leading preceptors is adopted by the followers.

VALLABHĀCĀRYA

Vallabhācārya (1478-1531) is said to have been born in Āndhra. In his view, *Brahman* having *sat, cit* and *ānanda* as its attributes is the cause of the world. But it is *nirviśeṣa* in the sense of not having any ordinary or material attribute It is one, infinite and the inner controller of all the selves. The difference perceived between them and *Brahman* is not natural, but due to His will Between the two, there is also non-difference which is perfect and not due to illusion (*māyā*), Hence this system is called *Śuddhādvaita*.

The Supreme Being is Kṛṣṇa and the way of attainment the *Puṣṭi mārga*. Vallabha's teachings rely largely on the *Bhāgavata*, which is admitted as the fourth *prasthāna*. Accordingly it is to be understood in its sevenfold meaning as *śāstra, skandha, prakaraṇa, adhyāya, vākya, pada* and *akṣara* [1572] '*Puṣṭi*' means 'nourishment'—from love of the Lord derived from His grace which nourishes its object. The grace may be ordinary, (*maryādā*) or special (*puṣṭi*). The latter destroys the effects of time, *karma* and *svabhāva* [1573]

1572. *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol I, p. 598.

1573. Vide

कृष्णानुग्रहरूपा हि पुष्टिः कालादिबाधिका ।

Tattvārtha-dīpa, II. 229.

The first step to attain God's grace is to surrender to Him. This evokes God's grace and purifies The next step is to render service to God in the form of an idol. Then comes *ātmanivedana* which consists in offering all of one's belongings to God, never using anything before an offering is made of it Service creates a strong attachment to the Lord called *nirodha* which is of three kinds—*prema*, *āsakti* and *vyasana*.[1574]

Pusti may be *śuddha* or *miśra*, *svārtha* or *parārtha* Rituals enjoined by the scriptures are inferior to devotion, they belong to the path of *maryādā* in which God's grace becomes limited in some way or other. But the *pusti mārga* is free of such limitations It can also be called the path of *nirguna-bhakti*, as it transecnds the materisl affections of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Such devotion has no object to gain and is disinterested [1575]

This path leads to enjoyment of divine vision The devotee has no need of renunciation. His enjoyment shows everything including *moksa* as worthless [1576] The cowherdesses of Brndāvan are treated as the *ācāryas* of this path.[1577] The devotee has to

1574. Vide

कृष्णसेवा तदा कार्या मानसी सा परा मता ।

Vallabha's *Siddhantamuktāvalī*.

Cf

प्रपञ्चविस्मृतिपूर्वकभगवदासक्तिः निरोधः ।

Harirāya on Vallabha s *Nirodha-laksana*, p 232.

1575 प्रेमपूर्विका सेवा हेतुः फलाभिसन्धानं
तद्रहिता अहैतुकी अनिमित्ता वा ।

Vallabha's *Subodhini* on *Bh*. III 29 12.

1576 *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol I, p 603,

1577. Vide

भगवत्युत्तमश्लोके भवतीभिरनुत्तमा ।
भक्तिः प्रवर्तिता दिष्ट्या मुनीनामपि दुर्लभा ॥

Cf. *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. II. p. 605.

cultivate their mental attitude, the *gopi-bhāva.* The bridal mysticism of such devotees requires the cultivation of some feminine traits. This leads to the *bhagavad-bhāva* in which the self finds the Lord in all things connected with Him, and He is realized as *Sarvātman.* In *moksa* the self acquires the *brāhma* body and satisfies all desires. There is no fall or return from that state.

Vallabha declares that the *pusti-mārga* is the real purport of the *Vedas,* the epics, the *Pāñcarātra* and all sacred texts.[1578]

Vide:

अर्थोऽयमेव निखिलैरपि वेदवाक्यै
रामायणैः सहितभारत पाञ्चरात्रैः ।
अन्यैश्च शास्त्रवचनैः सहतत्त्वसूत्रै
र्निर्णीयते सहृदयं हरिणा सदैव ॥

Tattvārthadīpa, I. 140.

It is open to all without any distinctions It is best among all the paths to salvation because there is no fear of a fall.

Vide:

मार्गोऽयं सर्वमार्गाणामुत्तमः परिकीर्तितः ।
यस्मिन् पातभयं नास्ति मोचकः सर्वथा यतः ॥

Ibid, II. 222.

The preceptors here are called *Gosvāmins* [1579] which is often written and spoken of as 'Gosains'. Their dress is costly and

1578 In his *Vṛtti* on *Tattvārtha-dīpa,* (I 3) Vallabha calls the *Bhāgavata, Gītā* and *Pāñcarātra* as *Bhagavat-chāstra.*

1579. One view is that this was originally a title of Caitanya and the preceptors of his cult After Vallabha's followers wrested control over a temple at Gokula from the followers of Caitanya, they are said to have taken the title. A. K. Majumdar, *Caitanya, his Life and Doctrine,* p. 273.

food luxurious. Their followers, among whom are many rich merchants and businessmen, are required to dedicate body, mind and wealth to them

Gold icons of Gopāla, Kṛṣṇa and Rādha are worshipped in their temples. The Kṛṣṇa image has a dark hue and is richly decorated. Worship is conducted eight times every day.[1580] The ritual does not follow any traditional procedure, but consists of offering flowers, perfumes and food to the accompaniment of prayers of praise.

Festivals are celebrated in temples They include, in addition to *Kṛṣṇa Jayantī*, the *Rāsyātra* in October. The dances of the *gopīs* are commemorated through song and dance. Pictures and images of Gopāla are worshipped in the house

Vallabha's followers mark the forehead with two red, vertical lines meeting at the top of the nose, with a round, red spot between them Similar marks are also found on the arms and chest of the devout. They wear rosaries of *tulasī* beads and greet one another as 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa' and 'Jaya G·pal'[1581]

Mathurā, Bṛndāvan, Pūrī and Dwāraka are their holy places. The greatest sanctity is attached to Śrī Nāth Dwār temple near Agra. Every one in the sect has to visit the place at least once in his life and contribute to its upkeep.[1582]

Vallabha holds that the *Brahma-sūtras* reject the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* because it teaches the birth of the self He agrees with it however on all other points. According to him it expounds the *puṣṭi-mārga*.

1580. For details, see H. H. Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, pp. 72-73.

1581. *Ibid.* p. 75.

1582. *Ibid.*

Vide :

> साक्षान्मोक्षसाधनत्वेन तान्त्रिकदीक्षा पूर्वकं
> विहितत्वेन क्रियमाणः श्रवणादि रूपासनामार्गो यः ।
> अयमेव वैष्णवो मार्ग इत्युच्यते ।[1583]

Vallabha's *Bhakti-haṁsa*, pp. 169.

This describes the *Pāñcarātra* method of worship and comes under *maryādā* in Vallabha's system.[1584] The *vyūhas* are however held to be inferior to God as Puruṣottama.[1585]

RĀMĀNANDA

Rāmānanda was born at Prayāga.[1586] The date is uncertain. He is claimed to be a direct disciple of Rāmānuja or the fourth-[1587] or the fifth in descent from him through Devānanda, Haryānanda and Rāghavānanda. On account of a dispute with his preceptor, Rāghavānanda, he was ostracised. This led to his founding a new sect open to all without distinction of caste or creed. The regional language replaced Sanskrit as the medium of instruction His twelve disciples were representative of all the castes and many professions. *Bhakti* and *prapatti* from the south were taken to the north by him.[1588]

He recognised no distinction between God and His devotees[1589] His teachings were marked by a spirit of

1583 See also *Tattvārthadīpa*, I 140

1584 Raghunātha en *Bhakti-hamsa*. pp 46-49

1585 *Cultural Heritage of India*, I. p 607

1586 *Ibid* p 378

1587 H H Wilson *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, pp. 23-24. Vide also *Bhakti-mālā*.

1588 *Cultural Heritage of India*, IV. p. 378 , P. N. Srinivasachari's *History of Viśiṣṭādvaita*, p. 543.

1589 *Ibid*. II. 287 , H. H. Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, pp. 24, 28-29.

synthesis. Whatever feeling (*bhāva*) is natural to one should be the basis for the means to attain God Devotees could be house-holders or recluses [1590]

The incarnation of God (Viṣṇu) as Rāma is held in the highest reverence among all His forms. Therefore the followers of this teacher are sometimes called 'Rāmavats' The *sālagrāma* and the *tulasī* plant are also worshipped. Mendicants called '*Bairāgīs*', numerous in the Indo-Gangetic plain and largely hailing from the poorer classes, chant the names of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa [1591]

Rāmānuja's liberalism, based on the Vaiṣṇava tradition coming down through the epics and the *purāṇas*, must have influenced Rāmānanda in preaching that distinctions of caste should not be observed among devotees. However, no Devānanda or Harinanda is known among the immediate disciples of Rāmānuja Perhaps the tenets of this school went to the north through men who were impressed by the teachings of Rāmānuja, and have also thus influenced several small sects in North India through Rāmānanda, among whom the followers of Kabīr are often included.

CAITANYA

Viśvambhara, born in 1486 A D , was called Gauranga on account of his fair complexion . After he became a monk, he was known by the name of Caitanya. His father was Jagannātha Miśra and his teacher Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, the great logician During a pilgrimage he received the *Gopāla-mantra* at Pūri from Īśvara Pūri Meditation on it led him to an ecstatic state filled with the vision of Kṛṣna and made him a worshipper of the Lord in this form along with Rādhā [1592]

1590. *Ibid.* p 25.

1591. *Ibid.* pp. 27-28

1592. A. K. Majumdar. *Caitanya, His Life and Doctrine*, p. 108, 133.

Though Caitanya's teacher, being a disciple of Mādhavendra Pūri,[1593] belonged to the Madhva tradition. Caitanya himself taught not *Dvaita*, but *Acintya bhedābheda*. He held that the difference and non-difference between the selves and God is inscrutable. This doctrine was later elaborated by Rūpa, Sanātana and Jīva, each of whom had the title of 'Gosvāmin'.[1594]

Nārāyaṇa and the four *vyūhas* are admitted as shining forms of Kṛṣṇa (God) Free from the influence of the *guṇas* of matter, He has three powers or energies—*saarūpa* or sentience, *taṭastha* or the self, and *bahiraṅga*, also called *māyā*. They correspond to *para*, *kṣetrajña* and *avidyā śaktis* The *svarūpa-śakti* has the three attributes of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, also known as *sandhinī*, *saṁvit* and *hlādinī* respectively. Rādhā represents the last of these.[1595]

The ideal of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa helps in realising the absence of distinction between Kṛṣṇa and His devotees Loving devotion towards God (*preman* or *bhakti-rasa*) is taken to be the fifth important aim of life (or *puruṣārtha*), the other four being practice of virtue, acquisition of wealth, satisfaction of desires and attainment of salvation The sentiment of devotion and the various religious emotions under this head are dealt with in the *Bhakti rasāmṛta-sindhu* and *Ujjvala-nīlāmaṇi* of Rūpa-gosvāmin and *Bhakti-sandarbha* of Jīva-gosvāmin

Bhakti is said to be of three kinds—*sādhana*, *bhāva* and *prema* Each of these is a stage. The performance of enjoined

1593 *Ibid* p. 47-50, 'Śrīpāda Mādhavendra' by Dr. H Vedānta Sastri, "A I O. C. Summaries of Papers", pp. 148-50. Majumdar records the tradition that the idol he worshipped was installed at Nath Dwar temple

1594 Majumdar, *Op cit*, ch XXIII.

1595. Majumdar, *Op. cit.*, chs, XXIII and XXIV.

rites rouses incipient devotion; which intensifies; and which finally serves as the means and end of enjoyment.[1596]

Bhakti should be preferred to *karma*, *jñāna*[1597] and *vairāgya*. It dispels doubts, destroys egotism and makes the effects of past actions wither away. The practice of intense devotion requires that the injunctions of the *Vedas*, *Smṛtis*, *Purāṇas* and *Pāñcarātra* texts be obeyed. *Jñāna* and *karma* should be regarded as a joint *upāya* in which the rituals are to be performed according to the *Pāñcarātra*[1598] *Jñāna* can be practised along with and as subordinate to *bhakti*. Viṣṇu's name and *mantras* (particularly, the *Gopāla-mantra*) are to be uttered always. All action must be dedicated to God Pilgrimages are recommended. God's forms, qualities and sports must be sung about *Prapatti* can also lead to *mokṣa*

The idol of God should not be throught of as a piece of stone. When an idol is taken in procession it must be circumambulated.

Worship of images is called *devatā yāga* and that of household deities *arcanā*. Hell awaits those who neglect them. Initiation is necessary for this kind of worship.

Among men the devotees of Viṣṇu are the best Among the gods, Śiva and Brahmā are to be worshipped as devotees of Viṣṇu Distinctions should not be observ d among devotees.

One Gopāla Bhaṭṭa from the south introduced the principles of the *Pāñcarātra* into Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇavism. His teachings are found in *Haribhakti-vilāsa*[1599] The influence of the *Āgama* is

1596. *Ibid.* pp. 293, 299, chs. XXV, XXVI.

1597. *Ibid.* pp. 335, 337.

1598. *Ibid.* pp. 324-332.

1599. *Ibid.* pp. 332-334 gave an account of this work in some detail.

considerable. *Vyūhas* are admitted. Saṅkarsana is said to preside over *ahaṅkāra*, Vāsudeva over *citta*, Pradyumna over *buddhi* and Aniruddha over *manas*. The pupils of Caitanya cite in their works the *Sātvata-saṁhitā*, *Hayaśīrsa-pāñcarātra* and other such texts. Rituals involve *bhūtaśuddhi* and follow the *Āgama* directions.[1600]

The school of Caitanya has developed an elaborate and complex theory of divine descents. Krsṇa or Purusottama is the Supreme Being and not a divine incarnation. He has three forms. The *svayaṁrūpa* is natural and exclusive to Him. The *tadekātma-rūpa* is a hypostatic manifestation identical with Him and also distinct through appearance and possession of attributes. This is subdivided into *vilāsa* (as in the case of Nārāyana and Vāsudeva) having the same power as the original exclusive form; *svāmśa*, which is inferior and exemplified by Matsya, Saṅkarsaṇa and others; and *āveśa* of *śakti* as in Ādi-śesa, of *jñāna* as in Sanaka, and of *bhakti* as in Nārada.[1601]

There is also a fivefold division of divine descents. The *vyūhas* represent the *purusāvatāra*. The *guna* variety allows the play of the three *guṇas* as in the case of the trinity of Brahmā, Visnu and Śiva. Twentyfour forms illustrate the *līlāvatāra* type. Every Manu's reign involves a descent, as in the case of Hari, Vaikuntha, Vāmana and others. Among the four *yugas*, each has its own special kind of descent.[1602]

The Supreme Being inspires certain souls and makes them descend as prophets. They are God's descents only in a

1600 Rūpa Gosvāmin's *Sanksepa-bhāgavatāmṛta*, p. 205

1601. S. K. De "The Doctrine of *Avatāra* in Bengal Vaiṣnavism" in *Studies in Indology* presented to M. M. Kuppuswami Sastri, p. 26.

1602 *Ibid* pp. 27-29. See also S. K. De's "Early History of the Vaiṣnava Faith and Movement in Bengal", p. 154 and Jīva-gosvāmin's *Śrī Kṛṣna-sandarbha* where nine *vyūha* descents are mentioned. The additional five are Nārāyana, Hayagrīva, Varāha, Nṛsimha and Brāhmana,

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa of the 18th century wrote the *Govinda-bhāṣya* on the *Brahma-sūtras* in accordance with the teachings of Caitanya. It is in the main on the lines of Madhva.[1608] A pupil of Pītāmbara-dāsa and Rādhā-dāmodara, he held the individual self to be a part of God. Rādhā is the foremost among His energies (*śaktis*) [1609] In another work, *Prameya-ratnākara* (VI. 1) he stressed the need for the five sacraments. The worship of the *sālagrāma* is *yāga* Vide

शालग्रामादिपूजा तु यागशब्देन कथ्यते ।

Prameya-ratnākara (VI. 3c).

The principle of *viśeṣa* (particularity), perhaps taken over from Madhva by Rādhā-dāmodara in his *Vedānta-śyamantaka*, is stated to help the Lord in whom it is inherent to distinguish Himself as *Brahman* and *Paramātman* Baladeva explains this as supra-logical (*acintya*) [1610] Passages are cited by these writers from the *Sātvata*, *Ānanda* and *Viṣvaksena Samhitās*.

The impact of Rāmānuja's teachings is seen in several respects. *Sevā* to God, the preceptor and devotees is enjoined. Significantly, *bhakti* is identified with it, Vide ·

भज इत्येष वै धातुःसेवायाः परिकीर्तितः ।
तस्मात्सेवा बुधैः प्रोक्ता भक्तिः साधनभूयसी ॥

Jīvagosvāmin cited by A K Majumdar,
Caitanya, p 327 &pp 329-31.

Thirtytwo offences are listed as needing to be avoided while offering service to the Lord They are similar to the enumeration of Vedānta Deśika in his *Pāñcarātra-rakṣā*.[1611]

1608. A. K Majumdar, *Op. cit* ch XXII

1609. *Ibid*, p. 290.

1610. Das Gupta, *Indian Philosophy*, IV. p. 442.

1611. Majumdar, *Op. cit.* pp. 301-2. Cf. *PR*, pp. 133-4.

Gopāla-bhaṭṭa's *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* gives a detailed account of the worship of images in temples and all rituals connected with it. It is on *Pāñcarātra* lines.[1612] Gopāla-visnu is the Supreme Deity according to *Kramadīpikā* which mentions the five sacraments This is another work of the school

Madhva's influence on Caitanya's philosophy amounts to little But in the line of Caitanya's preceptors is Mādhavendra Pūri, as mentioned in *Gaura ganoddeśa-dīpikā* [1613]

Caitanya's greatness is revealed in his stress on the practice of *bhakti* in many ways Worship of the idol at home and that at the temple is imperative. His social outlook was liberal In his teachings, women and Śūdras are permitted to worship the *sālagrāma*. But this right seems to be denied in practice.[1614] Structures are enjoined to be raised for housing the deities But there seems to be no provision for building shrines for Rādhā and Krsna.[1615]

Caitanya himself is worshipped as a dual descent of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa He is said to have been worshipped even during his life-time [1616]

The *rasika* aspect of the Rādhā Kṛṣṇa cult influenced the glorification of Rāma and Sītā on similar lines in a late work *Vasistha-saṁhitā*. But this Rāma cult does not appear to have had many followers [1617]

1612 *Ibid* pp 332-4

1613 *Ibid* p 264 There is discussion in ch XXII The authority of this work is disputed

1614 *Ibid* p 334

1615 *Ibid*.

1616 *Ibid* p. 292

1617 M R Misra, "A Note on the Vasiṣṭha-samhitā " in "Summary of Papers of the 26th International Congress of Orientalists", 1964, pp. 164-5. The work was copied in 1802 A D.

VIJÑĀNABHIKṢU

Vijñānabhikṣu (c. 1550 A D), a well known writer on the Sānkhya and Yoga systems, commented on the *Brahma-sūtras* in *Vijñānāmṛta* He was a Gauḍa ascetic who held the Supreme *Brahman* to be Śrī Kṛṣṇa Nārāyaṇa is *Kārya-Brahman* *Ātman* could be denoted by the word, '*Īśvara*'. Though He is the Lord of all, He creates *mahat* etc., with His potency called '*māyā*'.

Though there is really one Self, a plurality of selves has to be admitted for practical purposes

Among the *vyūha* manifestations, Vāsudeva alone is eternal. Saṃkarṣaṇa and others are His manifestations Saṃkarṣaṇa (Śiva), Pradyumna and Aniruddha arise from Viṣṇu, the subtle body of *Brahman* Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu are the manifestations of Bhagavān Matsya, Kūrma and other descents are *līlāvatāras*, while Bhagavān is an *ameśāvatāra* 1618

The *Utpatty-asambhavādhikaraṇa* of *Brahmasūtras* (II 2) is interpreted by Vijñānabhikṣu as denying that *Brahman* has birth. He thus wisely avoids the controversy about the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* 1619

OTHER VAIṢṆAVA SECTS

The important schools of Vaiṣṇavism referred to so far influenced some minor sects The founders of the schools could not have influenced these sects. They developed gradually. Rāmānanda, for example, could not have taught anyone who later founded a sect. But he is said to have had twelve chief disciples.1620 Some of them or their students and later

1618 *Vijnānāmṛta*, I. 1. 5.

1619. *Ibid.* II 2.

1620, Wilson and *Bhaktmālā* give different lists.

teachers seem to have started sects bearing their names. They belong to all castes and many professions. Stress on *bhakti* is the one common feature among them.

Among such teachers was Tulasī Dās (1545-1624), a pupil of Jagannātha Das and his student, Nābhaji. (In another version he studied under Nara Hari Dāsa, a pupil of Rāmāṇanda) [1621] He was a Brahmin of Hajipur near Citrakūta. After a sojourn at Brndāvana with Nābhāji he wrote the *Rāmacarita-mānasa*, a celebrated work which gives a Hindi version of the *Rāmāyana* He ardently advocated the worship of Rāma and Sītā His epic seems intended to prevent the disintegration of *sanātana-dharma*.

God is taught to be formless. But the love of His devotees for Him induces Him to assume a visible form, just as the water, latent in ice and hailstones, becomes patent under certain conditions [1622] The real devotee finds God in the movable and immovable things [1623]

He is an ardent champion of *bhakti* and describes its nine varieties [1624] It is fostered by the company of holy men and recluses Devotion annihilates the sufferings caused by the cycle of births and deaths But the path of *jñāna* is hazardous: one following it is liable to fall [1625]

The Lord is said to take His abode in the heart of the self for two reasons The self must not seek anything from Him: there must be genuine love for Him

1621. *Cultural Heritage of India*, IV 395.

1622. *Rāma-carita-mānasa*, I. 115 1-2.

1623. *Ibid* IV 3

1624. *Ibid* III 344.

1625 *Ibid*. VII 118. 1-4.

In metaphysics, Tulasi Dās considers as erroneous the theories that declare the world as real, unreal, or partly real and partly unreal The seeker of self-realisation must reject them. For they are of no help in realising one's nature or that of God [1626] But some claim him to be a follower of Śankara, though he was a devotee of Rāma and had the title of 'Gosain' (as borne out from his *Jñānadīpikā*) [1627]

Another teacher of a small Vaisnava sect was Nābhāji (1600) who wrote the *Bhaktimālā* He was initiated into Vaisnavism by Agradās, though his connection with Rāmānanda is not proved.[1628]

Widely prevalent in North India is the worship of Rādhā and Krsna The importance given to God in a feminine form dates back to the distant past The *Śākta Āgamas* play up this tradition and make male divinities inferior. Other *Āgamas* tend to give equal importance to both the sexes in their conception of Godhead. Thus Laksmī and Sītā are given due importance in Vaisnava *Agamas* Rāmānuja stressed the importance of worshipping the Father as well as the Mother of the universe. But the name of Rādhā does not occur in the source-books of the Krsna cult

A sect of Rādhā-vallabhis worship Krsna merely as the *vallabha* or lover of Rādhā to whom primary importance is given Harivamśa who founded a mutt at Brndavana in 1585, is said to be its founder. His *Rādhā-sudhānidhi* praises Rādhā [1629] On the whole, the cult does not seem to be very different from Bengal Vaisnavism

1626. *Vinaya-patrikā*, III.

1627. Munshi, "Indological Felicitation Volume", XX, XXI and pp. 401-411

1628 H H Wilson· *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p. 31.

1629. *Ibid*, pp. 98-100.

Some Vaisnava sects with limited following are found in Jaipur, Delhi, Orissa and a few other places. They bear such names as Śaktibhāvas, Hariśchandīs, Sādhana-panthis and Mādhavis. The sect of Caraṇ-dāsis preaches high moral standards and enjoins regular worship of the *sālagrāma*.[1630]

The '*bairāgis*' and various orders of ascetics like the Nāgas do not constitute different sects, though H H Wilson takes that view.[1631] They belong to the sects mentioned above and similar Vaiṣṇava sects, their differences in observances being due more to their life as recluses than to the theoretical aspects of philosophy or religion.

A peculiar cult called 'Radhāswāmi' had for its fifth leader Param Guru Huzur Sahabji Maharaj (born in 1881). His *Yathārthā-prakāśa* states that the Supreme Being, superior to the perishable and the imperishable, is the Parama-puruṣa The worship of Kṛṣna who is His divine descent, yields spiritual benefits As renunciation is held to be impossible, the active life of performing the duties enjoined in the *śāstras* is advocated *Yoga* is also recommended.

SPREAD OF VAISNAVISM

Many of the important developments of Vaisnavism in later times have been briefly glanced at in the last few pages But Vaiṣnavism has prevailed all over India from ancient times, as may be seen from numerous temples, inscriptions and literary works. Many royal dynasties patronised the cult, but without narrow-minded fanaticism The regions over which they ruled constantly changed on account of wars and conquests It is not therefore easy to determine the history of Vaiṣavism in each region.

1630 *Ibid* pp 100-103.

1631. *Ibid.* 103-6.

The tolerant spirit suffered a serious setback when Rāmānuja was persecuted and the Viṣṇu idol at the Govindarāja shrine in Chidambaram was removed. These anti-Vaiṣṇava activities are attributed to Kulottunga I in the 11th century. There is a tradition that Rāmānuja consecrated the temple at Melkote (in Karnataka) in 1099 A D. and that he remained there till 1110 when the persecuting king died [1632] But other dates have been mentioned such as 1070 when Adhirajendra was the ruler [1633] The Chidambaram sacrilege is dated at 1087 A D.[1634] Though all this led to ill feeling between Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas and many bitter attacks in writings were made by each against the other, the kings continued to extend their patronage to all cults, though they might have faith only in one of them. Hence inscriptions of a Vaiṣṇavite tinge, Viṣṇu temples and coins with emblems like Garuḍa on them do not prove any exclusive faith of the ruler or the people of the area in Viṣṇu.

Below is attempted a brief survey of Vaiṣṇavism in the several States of India in broad outline.

1 *Tamil Nadu*

Vaiṣṇavism is known in Tamil Nadu even at the beginning of the Christian era Ancient classics like *Śilappadikāram*, *Paripādal*, *Ahanānūru* and *Puranānūru* which belong to the early centuries after Christ contain references to the temples at Śrīrangam, Tirumalai, Tirumāliruñcolai (near Madurai) and Tiruvanantapuram [1635] The divine descents of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa were being worshipped indicating an old tradition about them. Most of the temples referred to are in Pāṇḍya and Cola regions.

1632. *Guruparamparā prabhāva* of Tṛtīya Brahmatantra-svatantra Jīyar. Kulottunga died only in 1120.

1633 Prof K. A Nilakanta Sastri's *Cholas.*

1634 T A Gopinatha Rao, *History of Śrīvaiṣṇavas*, p. 44

1635 Vide E S Varadaraja Iyer's *A History of Tamil Literature*, pp 203-250.

One striking feature of the classics is their freedom from narrow sectarian prejudices.

Manimekalai, a poem of the 3rd century, shows that there were debates and discussions between various sects, including Vaiṣṇavism.[1636] It refers to worshippers of Viṣṇu living at Vañci,[1637] along with followers of other sects. It is positive evidence on the prevalence of the cult in that area, but has no bearing on the conditions in other places.

The Āzhvārs (who perhaps flourished between 600 and 800 A D) have sung of about 82 shrines in Tamil Nadu, scattered along the east coast and spreading westward to the Pāṇdya and Cera territories. Temple worship should have been well established long before their time. Epigraphic evidence shows that most of them followed the *Vaikhānasa* rituals The Uttaramerūr temple and the cave temples at Māmallapuram appear to have been constructed according to the *Marīci-samhitā* of that school [1638] While this is testimony to the popularity of this *Āgama*, the absence of epigraphical references to the *Pāñcarātra* cannot prove that it was unknown.

Among the Pallavas Simhaviṣṇu (r. 575 600) and his brother's descendant, Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (r 710-75), were devotees of Viṣṇu [1639] Rājarāja I (r 985-1014 A D.) of the Colas was well disposed towards Vaisnavism His sister, Kundavai, built a Visnu temple at Dadapuram in South Arcot.

1636 See V Varadachari ' Treatment of the schools of religion and philosophy in *Manimekalai* ", *S V V O Institute Journal*, XIV, pp 9-28

1637 See *Manimekalai*, XXVII 98-99 For the identity of Vañci see R. Raghava Iyengar's *Araiccittokuti*, p 257

1638 Vide " Contribution of Tamil Nadu to Sanskrit in the Pallava period, mainly from epigraphs " by R Nagaswamy " Summary of Papers "', International Sanskrit Conference, Vol I, pp, 38-9. Cf. *Avantīsundarī*, p. 156.

1639. R, Satyanatha Iyer, *History of India*, Vol. I, pp, 262, 321.

Considerable benefactions to Śiva temples were also made. This harmony between the sects during the Cola period is marred by the persecution of the Vaisnavas in the 11th century already referred to: but the persecution did not spread to Kāñci.[1640]

In the rock-cut monuments of the Pallava period as at Mahendravadi and Māmaṇḍūr are found figures and paintings of Viṣṇu. The Mahendra style is seen at Māmandūr at Śingapperumāl Kovil (near Chingleput), at the Raṅganātha cave temple at Śingavaram and at the Dharmarāja-mantapa at Māmallapuram In Māmallapuram itself, the Varāha-maṇtapa and the Ādi-varāha cave temple show the Māmalla style At Tiruttangal in Rāmanāthapuram an admixture of the Cālukya and Pāndya styles may be seen [1641]

The Vaikuntha-perumāl temple at Kāñci is remarkable for its huge structures and panelled sculptures. It is said to have been built by Nandivarman Pallava (710-75) [1642] But Tirumaṅgai Āzhvār calls the temple 'Parameśvara-vinnagaram' and associates the name 'Pallava' with the stanzas in praise of the Lord as enshrined there.[1643] This suggests that Parameśvara-varman (660 80) constructed it. Nandivarman's name is associated with another temple near Kumbhakonam called 'Nandipura-vinnagaram'. Perhaps he completed the Kāñci temple and built the temple near Kumbhakonam. His successor, Dantivarman, constructed on similar lines a fine temple for Sundaravaradaperumāl at Uttaramerūr.[1644] Later

1640 *Ibid* pp 401-2.

1641. "Archaeological Remains Monuments and Museums, Part I. Rock-cut Monuments" by K, R Srinivasan, pp. 142-3, 145-6.

1642 *Ibid.* Part II, p 219-20

1643. *Periya Tirumozhi*, II, 9

1644 "Archaelogical Remains. Monuments and Museums" Part II, p 221.

Vijayanagar rulers improved on the traditions evolved by the Pallavas, Cālukyas, Colas and Pāndyas. For example, the cornices with monolithic stone chains at the *kalyana-mandapa* built by them at Śrī Varadarāja Swāmi temple at Kāñci is a fine example of artistic progress.[1645]

The spread of Vaisṇavism in Tamil Nadu owes much to the diffusion of the Azhvārs' poems by Nāthamuni, Yāmuna, Rāmānuja and their successors. The Pallava rulers, Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇdya, Kulottunga II, Rajendra Cola, Vijayanagar emperors and the Naik kings at Madurai and Tanjore made invaluable contributions by constructing, renovating and maintaining temples of Visnu[1646]

Rāmānuja's followers are the most nurmerous among the Vaisnavas in Tamil Nadu. His efforts at moral and spiritual regeneration were directed in many directions He reformed the administration of the temple at Śrirangam , wrote out a manual. *Nitya*, for the daily round of religious duties , graded religious and philosophical instruction and practices according to the qualifications of each Vaiṣṇava, instituted or re-organised the recitation of Āzhvārs' compositions daily in the temples and in the streets whenever the processional idol was taken out, and the celebration of the *adhyayana utsava* once every year, he deified the Āzhvārs; and founded seventyfour ecclesiastical seats of authority and perhaps some mutts also

The reforms at Śrirangam temple were extensive The staff were divided into ten groups each with specific duties. The *Vaikhānasa* mode of worship was changed to the *Pāñcarātra*.

1645 *Ibid.* pp 236-7

1646 Vide (i) K, A. Nilakanta Sastri's *The Pāndyan Kingdom* and (ii) *The Colas* II; (iii) V N Hari Rao *Koyil Ozhugu*. (iv) P R Srinivasan. *Inscriptional Evidence on Early Hindu Temples* and (v) *Brahma-vidyā*, XXVI, pp. 18-21.

Seals with figures of Garuḍa, Śaṁkha and Cakra were made to be used by different authorities.[1647]

The *Nitya* inspired many later works of the same kind; to which reference has been made in earlier pages. Not content with the manual, he is said to have given the following instruction to suit different aptitudes and qualifications.

पटित्वा भाष्यं तत्प्रवचनमशक्तौ शठरिपुगिरि श्रद्धा,
वासः प्रभुपरिचितस्थाननिवहे ।
प्रभोः कैङ्कर्यं वा प्रपन्नमनोरथमननं
प्रपन्नानां वामे भवतु परिचर्यापरिचयः ।

Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparamparā, p. 242.

Another easy duty he imposed was the maintenance of flower-gardens for the benefit of temples.

Rāmānuja arranged for the installation of the images of Āzhvārs in temples. Annual festivals were instituted for celebrating their birthdays The idols of the Āzhvārs were assembled before the Lord in temples during the annual *Adhyayana* festival and accorded honours.

Seventyfour *ācārya-puruṣas* (spiritual preceptors) are said to have been authorised by him to instruct and initiate disciples and give them the sacrament of the *pañca-saṁskāra*. Most of them were householders and some of their descendants continue to exercise their spiritual office But the tendency nowadays for those who care for initiation is to seek it at a mutt.

It is quite probable that the systematic organisation of the *mathas* (mutts), religious institutions presided over by *sannyāsins* and entrusted with propagating doctrines, initiating disciples and administering temples, was due to him. Such institutions

1647. The "*Koyil Ozhugu*' edited by V. N Hari Rao gives details.

continue to this day. In case the very institutions founded by him have not survived, later ones could have taken their place.[1648] *Mathas* are associated with the temples at Tirumalai and Śrīrangam. Among *mathas* started later may be mentioned those named after Ahobilam and Vānamāmalai. The former, though started at Ahobilam in the Andhra region, has been presided over by *sannyāsins* from Tamil Nadu, where it has several branches. Similarly, the Vānamāmalai *Matha*, with its headquarters in Tirunelveli District, has branches in almost every place sacred to Viṣṇu.

Rāmānuja accorded primary importance to Śrīraṅgam among the places sacred to Vaiṣṇavas. The following Sanskrit prayer for the temple is attributed to him :

श्रीमन्नः श्रीरङ्गश्रियमनुपद्रवामनुदिनं संवर्धय ।

Rāmānuja's successors made it incumbent on the part of every Vaiṣṇava to recite this in every temple and home.

Among other contributions of Rāmānuja may be mentioned the settling of Vaiṣṇava families round temples to render service, help in their maintenance and derive spiritual benefit from them.

The term, 'Vaiṣṇava', in Tamil Nadu has largely come to mean a follower of Rāmānuja, because the majority of the worshippers of Visnu owe allegiance to him. But there are also a considerable number of Mādhvas in the region, and they are also Vaiṣṇavas. There are only a few representatives of other Vaiṣṇava sects from other regions in Tamil Nadu.

2. *Karnataka*

In the Karnataka region Vaiṣṇavism dates back to many hundreds of years before Rāmānuja. But till his sojourn there, Jainism was in a flourishing condition. Viṣṇugopa (r. 450-460)

1648 It is claimed that Sri Yadugiri Yatirāja Mutt of Melkote was founded by Ramanuja and has continued to this day.

of the Western Gaṅgas was more a saint than a king. He gave up Jainism and became a Vaiṣṇava. Durvinita (540-600) of the same family was also a worshipper of Viṣṇu.[1649]

Two of the rock-cut monuments at Badami in Bijapur District are dedicated to Viṣṇu. Bas-reliefs on the walls represent the divine descents One of the monuments is known to have been excavated in 578 A D. by Mangalīśa, brother of Kirtivarman. It contains the figure of Astabhuja-svāmin [1650]

Biṭṭideva (r 1111-1141) of the later dynasty of Hoysālas was an ardent Jaina who was attracted to Rāmānuja when in exile from the Cola kingdom and became a Vaiṣṇava and called himself Viṣṇuvardhana. It is said that this followed on Rāmānuja freeing his son from possession by an evil spirit in 1099 [1651] While the king continued to be tolerant towards Jainas and Śaivism, he built at Rāmānuja's instance the Nārāyana temple at Melkote.

The Hoysāla style of architecture is seen in the temples built by him and his successors. He consecrated the Vijaya-nārāyaṇa (also known as Cenna Keśava) temple at Belur in 1117. This temple became a complex of temples under Ballala II and others "The temple is a veritable museum of sculptures, large and small, and intricate vegetal and floral carvings "[1652] A smaller temple in the same style was built at Somanāthapura in 1268 [1653]

1649. R Satynatha Iyer, *History of India*, I p 259.

1650 *Brahmavidyā*, XXVI Pts 1-2 p 17. See also "International Congress of Orientalists Summaries of Papers", p. 161.

1651. *T A.* Gopinatha Rao, *History of Śrīvaiṣṇavas*, p. 36. The dates of Rāmānuja's persecution and his flight to Karnataka require verification.

1652. ' Archaeological Remains, Monuments and Museums. Part II. Southern Temples " by K. R Srinivasan, pp. 210-11.

1653. *Ibid.* p. 212.

The Jaina version of Bittideva's conversion adds that it was followed by thousands of Jains being ground by oil mills[1654] The allegation is not generally believed, but regarded as "a favourite embellishment in handing down accounts of disputations."[1655] This is supported by Viṣṇuvardhana's continued patronage of Jainism and Śaivism. The same policy continued under his son, Narasimha I (1141-73). His son and successor, Ballāla II (1173-1220), favoured Śaivism, but was tolerant. Narasiṁha II (1220-35) was a tolerant Vaiṣṇava. Someśvara, his son, neglected Viṣṇu temples which were renovated by Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya who defeated him[1656] In the period that followed, perfect amity prevailed among the various sects. A temple to Harihara (combining in himself the characters of Śiva and Viṣṇu) was built.

The most important Vaiṣṇava centre in Karnātaka is Melkote. Rāmānuja is said to have stayed there from between 12 to 25 years. Apart from finding the *mūla bera* of Nārāyaṇa and consecrating it, he also brought somewhere from the north the *utsava* idol and named it 'Sampatkumara'[1657] The Nārāyaṇa (otherwise known as Rāmapriya) temple is said to have been built in the Bahudhānya year corresponding to 1098 A D.[1658] During the annual festival in March-April the outcastes (or '*Tirukkulattār*' as Rāmānuja is said to have called them and now known as Harijans) were allowed to enter the

1654 *Yatirājavaibhava*, 97

1655 William Coelho, *The Hoysāla Vamśa* p 284

1656 *Ibid* pp 251-95

1657. The traditional account that he brought the idol from a Moslem ruler at Delhi clashes with the historical fact that Delhi was under Hindu rule till the 1190's.

1658. The difficulties in accepting this date are pointed out in S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar's *History of Tirupati*, I, pp. 273-5.

temple for worship on the occasion of the car festival and succeeding days.[1659]

The hill range on which the temple is built is known as Yadugiri or Yādavādri on account of traditions of association with the Yādava clan to which Śrī Krsna belonged. On account of Rāmānuja's stay there it came to be called 'Yatigiri'.[1660]

Though the Āzhvārs did not celebrate Tirunārāyanapuram in their compositions it is said that Rāmānuja dedicated a decade of verses in *Tiruvāymozhi* (IV 1), where meditation on the divine feet of Tirunārāyana (Śrīman-nārāyana) is recommended.

The daily worship at the temple is conducted according to the *Pāñcarātra* mode. Rāmānuja's directions are followed in the daily routine and the annual festivals. There is no shrine for Āndāl in the temple, and the features of the *Adhyayana* festival in December-January differ in some respects from those of the same festival in Tamil Nadu temples. The daily recitation of the Āzhvārs' hymns is carried on in Tamil even though the temple is in a Kannada-speaking region. (The life of the Vaisnavas in Karnātaka is not different from that in Tamil Nadu) [1661] The idol of Rāmānuja in the temple was installed and consecrated at the request of his devotees when he left Melkote for Śrīrangam [1662]

There are several Vaisnava *mathas* at Melkote The Yadugiri Yatirāja Mutt claims to have been founded by Rāmānuja. The Ahobila and Vānamāmalai Mutts have their

1659 C R Srinivasa Iyengar *Life of Rāmānuja*, p. 224.

1660 *Yatirājavaibhāva*, 100-103

1661 It may be of interest to note that an inscription of Rajendra Cola, dated 1014 in Karnataka refers to a *Śrīvaisnava* community M N Parthasarathy in *Ramānujavānī*, January 1980, p. 89.

1662 *Yatirāja-vaibhava*, 103.

branches here. The Parakāla Swāmi *Matha* also has a branch. This institution has its headquarters at Mysore. It is held to have been founded by Brahmatantra-svatantra-svāmin, a direct disciple of Vedānta Deśika. The idol of Hayagrīva worshipped in the *Matha* by its heads is said to have come down from Rāmānuja through Vedānta Deśika. For a long time the rulers of Mysore owed allegiance to the *Maṭha*. It has branches outside Karnataka in Tamil Nadu, Andhra and even in Allahabad.

Scholars in Karnataka till the beginning of this century and a little later have made valuable contributions which can easily bear comparison with those in Tamil Nadu

Udipi (near Mangalore) in the Karnataka region has a temple of Śrī Kṛṣṇa built by Madhvācārya. It has several *mathas* some of which have branches in Andhra and Tamil Nadu. Udipi is a centre of pilgrimage for Madhvas.

Surveying the history of the Karnataka region as a whole, it is found that Vaiṣṇavism flourished at different periods under the regimes of Kādambas, Cālukyas, Hoysālas, Vijayanagar kings and Nāyaks of Madurai. These rulers held sway over the whole or some parts of the region [1663]

3 *Andhra*

Inscriptions mentioning Viṣṇu and His temples in the Āndhra region are available from the 2nd century. At Chirma in Krishna District an inscription of Yajña Śātakarṇi (*c* 165-194) begins with an invocation to Vāsudeva. The Pallavas who succeeded the Ikṣvākus were upholders of *vaidika-dharma*. The queen of Buddhavarman (*c* 250 A D) made gifts to the Viṣṇu temple at Dātūra. About the same time a temple to Viṣṇu-hārakula was built at Kandukuru by Viṣnugopavarman, the

1663. A. D. Karmarkar, *Cultural History of Karnataka*, p. 171.

general of the *yuva-rājā*, Viṣṇugopa.[1664] Nandivarman (c. 420) of the Sālaṅkāyana family made gifts to Viṣnugṛhasvāmin. [1665] Viṣṇuvardhana, the founder of the eastern Cālukya dynasty who ruled coastal Andhra, was known as '*Parama-bhāgavata*'. [1666] Under the Vijayanagar emperors (14th to 16th century) Vaiṣṇavism made notable progress. The Telugu epic, *Āmukta-mālyadā* of Emperor Kṛṣṇadeva-rāya (1509-30), treating of the life of Godā and the Āzhvārs, testifies to the strength of the Vaiṣṇava influence.

The most famous temple in the region is that of Śrīnivāsa at Tirumalai Once on the northern borders of the Tamil region, it is referred to by the earliest Tamil literature. Nine of the Āzhvārs and Āndāl sing of it. Early inscriptions refer to constructions in the temple by Rājarāja Cola and Yādavarāya. Later, the Sāluvas, Krsnadevarāya, Acyutarāya and Sadāśiva-rāya made offerings to the temple [1667]

There are other temples of Visnu at Tirupati at the foot of the Tirumalai hills and at Tiruccānūr near by Many temples were built or renovated by Vijayanagar rulers Among them the Vithalasvāmi temple is said to be the finest of its kind in South India [1668] Other rulers who patronised Vaiṣṇavism in the Andhra region include Mummadi Nāyaka and the Reddi kings They were all tolerant to other faiths [1669]

1664 *Brahmavidyā*, Dts 1-2 "Inscriptional Evidence in Hindu Temples", pp 18-20

1665 *Epigraphica Indica* IX pp 317-9

1666 "Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute," XLII, p 165

1667. S Krishnaswamy Iyengar, *History of Tirupati*, Vol. I & II. See also *S V V O R. Journal* XIV, Pt 1, p. 48.

1668 *S V. V. O R Journal*, XIV Pt, II. pp 41-48.

1669 M Somasekhara Sarma, *History of the Reddi Kingdom*, p. 315.

The temple at Ahobilam in Kurnool District has been extolled by Tirumangai Āzhvār. Those at Śrikūrmam (Śrikākulam) and Simhācalam (Visakhapatnam) have associations with Rāmānuja. There are other famous shrines at Mangalagiri (Guntur) and Bhadrachalam (Godavari).

The Smārta Brahmins of the region who joined the sect of Rāmānuja under his influence and that of his successors seem to constitute a separate sub-community by themselves. Families belonging to the sect living in Tirupati from early times and this sub-community keep themselves somewhat aloof from each other. But the way of life of all Vaiṣṇavas in Andhra does not differ from that in other regions. The same is true of temple rituals. The *Divyaprabandha* and its commentaries are studied in Telugu script and used.

Rāmānuja's associations with Tirupati are numerous. He demonstrated that the recent claim of the Śaivas that the Deity in the temple was Śiva was untenable. The Deity Himself is said to have preferred the insignia of Viṣṇu.[1670] A philosophical discourse which is now embodied in his *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* was delivered in the temple in the presence of the Lord. Sudarśana Sūri (13th century) begins his commentary, *Tātparya-dīpikā*, thus.

श्रीभाष्यकृदुपन्यस्तो यः श्रीशैलपतेः पुरः ।
वेदार्थसंग्रहस्यास्य कुर्मस्तात्पर्यदीपिकाम् ॥

When the image of Govindarāja at Chidambaram was thrown into the sea, Rāmānuja recovered it and had it installed at Tirupati, perhaps much earlier than 1135 at which tradition places this event.[1671] The conduct of the rituals of the temple

1670. *Yatirāja-vaibhava*, 90-92.

1671. S Krishnaswamy Iyengar *History of Tirupati*, I 281. T A Gopinatha Rao discusses the question in *History of Śrīvaiṣnavas*, pp. 38-9.

was settled by him. But how far he was responsible for all its features is a matter of opinion.[1672]

There are several *mathas* at Tirumalai. There is one connected with the temple Branches of Ahobila, Vānamāmalai and Parakāla Svāmin's *mathas* are at Tirumalai Under their influence Telugu-speaking Vaiṣṇavas have learnt to speak and read Tamil.

In Rāmānuja's days, his uncle, Tirumalai Nambi, and disciple, Anantārya, were rendering service at the Tirumalai temple. The family of Pillān, the second son of Tirumalai Nambi, settled in the heart of the State and enjoyed royal patronage in the Vijayanagar empire.

The followers of Madhva are also found in the region. Mutts of this faith are there Mantrālaya near Adoni is the seat of a pontiff In later days, a group of Dāsas emerged, who sang devotional songs in Kannada and spread *bhakti*.

4 *Kerala*

The temples of Visnu in Kerala are numerous They have been following for hundreds of years the *tāntrik* mode of worship The *Tantra-samuccaya* of Nārāyana Nambutiri (born 1428) is a standard text book in twelve chapters dealing with the worship of various deities including Viṣṇu. Temple architecture is also treated in *Devālaya-candrikā* This work on temples and *Manusyālaya-candrikā* on human residences are also attributed to him [1673] They quote there *Tantra-samuccaya* *S'esa-samuccaya*, dealing with matters not dealt with in this work, is of unknown authorship

1672 *Itihāsa-mālā*, II, VII Cf T T D Epigraphical Report, 1930, pp 86-89, also S Krishnaswamy Iyengar.

1673 N V Mallaya, "Studies in Sanskrit Texts on Temple Architecture," Preface, p 111, and *Brahmavidyā*, XXV, pp 582-5 Mallaya mentions the several texts on architecture and temple worship on which Nārāyana Nambutiri's work is based.

Among the Visṇu temples in Kerala, the most famous are those at Trivandrum, Guruvāyūr and Tiruvāṭṭāru There are also thirteen temples including that at Trivandrum which have been hymned by the Āzhvārs, but most of them are not well-known. The following is the list of the thirteen temples included among the 108 holy shrines :

(1) Tiruvaṇpariśāram near Nagercoil. (2) Tiruvaṭṭāru between Nagercoil and Trivandrum. (3) Tiruvanantapuram (which is the correct name of Trivandrum). (4) Tiruvāranvilai near Chengannur between Ernakulam and Quilon. (5) Tiruccenkunrūr Citrāru near by. (6) Tirukkadittānam near Chenganacheri. (7) Tiruvallavāzh near Kottayam. (8) Tiruvaṇvaṇḍūr near by. (9) Tiruppuliyūr near by. (10) Tirukkāṭkarai near Ernakulam. (11) Tirumūzhikkalam near Alwaye. (12) Tiruvittuvakkodu near Shoranur, (13) Tirunāvāy near by

Of these, all except Tiruvittuvakkodu have been sung by Nammāzhvār That temple was hymned by Kulaśekhara. Tirunāvāy has been glorified by Tirumaṅgai Āzhvār The shrine at Tirumūzhikkalam also has received poetic tributes from Tirumaṅgai Āzhvār Tiruvaṅpariśāram is said to be the birth-place of Nammāzhvār's mother ; there is a shrine for him in the temple. If the Guruvāyūr temple is earlier than the Āzhvārs, it escaped their attention like other well-known temples in Tamil Nadu such as Śrīmuṣṇam and Madurāntakam.

Though the thirteen temples are in Malayālam-speaking Kerala, they have been celebrated in Tamil song Kulaśekhara, one of the Āzhvārs, is said to have been the ruler of the regions round Kozhikkoḍe (Calicut) All this suggests that Tamil must have been widely spoken in this area between 600—800 A.D. and that the temples must have followed the well-known Vaiṣnava *Āgamas.*

But today they are mostly governed by *Tantra-samuccaya* and *Śeṣa-samuccaya.* In some shrines the *Pāñcarātra* and *Vaikhānasa*

modes are seen. The *Pāñcarātra* has been incorporated into the *Tantra-samaccaya* in regard to the construction of temples, installation of idols and conduct of daily worship. At Trivandrum, however, no particular text is said to be followed The priests are governed by a tradition of instruction received through a long line of teachers, according to the directions of a sage called Divākara The ritual of worship includes *nyāsa* and *mudrā*

Kerala Viṣṇu temples do not have any marking like the *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* on the walls or anywhere else, unlike as in temples in Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Karnataka. Nor are there shrines to Sudarśana, Rāmānuja or the Āzhvārs—not even in the temples glorified in the *Divyaprabandha* Lakṣmī gets a separate shrine only at Tirunāvāy. On the other hand, most of them have a shrine for Śāstā (otherwise known as Aiyappan) In Trivandrum, Vyāsa and Aśvatthāman also have separate shrines,

The priests in these temples hold office by heredity and qualify themselves by initiation They come from the ranks of either the Nambutiri Brahmins of Kerala or the Pottis belonging to the Mādhva *saṁpradāya*. The Nambutiris are followers of Śaṅkarācārya, but are different from the Smārta Brahmins in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere. While they do not undergo the *pañca-saṁskāra*, the Pottis receive from the heads of the *maṭhas* at Udipi on the *śayana-ekādaśī* day the marks of the heated emblems of the conch and discus. Nambutiris called 'Tantris' conduct the festivals at important temples.

All the Kerala temple priests, whether Nambutiris or Pottis, wear a vertical mark of sandal paste (*gopī-candana*) on the forehead as well as on other specified parts of the body. They enter the shrines in wet clothes after a bath and without any upper cloth. They distribute to the worshipper as *prasāda* holy water and sandal paste. The *śaṭhāri* is not in use in Kerala. Male worshippers in the temples are also not allowed to wear any upper cloth.

In most places, the temples have no vehicles or *vāhanas*: the Deity is carried on a living elephant for processions At Trivandrum, Tiruvāṭṭāru and some other places, a few vehicles are used At Trivandrum these consist of Garuda, Kamala (or the lotus), Indra, Śesa and the palanquin There, the main festival is conducted twice a year for Ananta-padmanābha and once a year for Krsṇa, Nrsiṁha and others. The festival is for ten days The palanquin is used on two days and the Garuda on four For the first eight days, the Deity is taken in procession inside the temple twice a day, in the evening at half past four and four hours later On the ninth day called *vettai* (hunting), which is known as *mṛgayā* in the *Agamas*, the Deity is taken outside the temple So also on the tenth day when the *avabrtha* (or *ārāttu*) takes place at the sea near Trivandrum There is no *Veda-pārāyana* group in the processions.

The temple of Krsna at Guruvāyūr is the most famous in Kerala It attracts worshippers even from outside Pilgrims fulfill vows (*prārthanās*) as at Tirumalai in Andhra Nārāyana Bhaṭṭatiri's (*c* 1550) famous poem, *Nārāyanīya*, a beautiful epitome of the *Bhāgavata*, is addressed to Kṛṣṇa as enshrined in this temple.

The Vaisnavas of Kerala cannot be distinguished from other sects through external appearance or specific observances They owe allegiance to the philosophy of Śankara. They wear the *ūrdhva-puṇdra* with sandal paste and not with the sacred white mud and the red *śrīcūrna*. Nor do they have the *pañca-saṁskāra* The only exceptions are descendants of Tamil Vaisnavas at Trivandrum There are a few villages near Palghat where *ūrdhva-pundra* is worn as in Tamil Nadu. They are said to have a distant connection in the past with the Ahobila Mutt. In this region, there are also a few temples where the priests claim to be descendants of *Vaikhānasas* brought there in the past.

Unlike in other parts of India, worship of Paraśurāma as an *avatāra* is carried on in Kerala This is prohibited in the *Pāñcarātra*. Vide:

भार्गवरामरहिताः ।

(*Kriyā-kairava-candrikā*, p. 196)

5. *Mahārāṣtra*

Like Kerala, the Mahārāṣtra region is free from sectarian exclusiveness The specific attention paid to Śaivism has not affected the worship of Viṣṇu Historically, Vaiṣṇavism has flourished in this area through the reigns of the dynasties of Śātavāhanas, Ikṣvākus, Rāṣṭrakūṭas, Ābhīras, Cālukyas and others whose sway often extended into adjoining regions.

As early as the 2nd century B C we have the Nāneghāt inscription of Queen Nāyanikā, wife of Siri Śātakarini I, which invokes Dharma, Saṅkarṣana, Vāsudeva and others The inscription of King Vāsiṣṭhīputra (*c* 155 A D) refers to Rāma (i e., Balarāma) and Keśava (i e., Kṛṣṇa).[1674] The Ābhīra king, Vāsiṣṭhīpūtra Vasusena (3rd century A D) who was a Śaiva, installed a wooden image of Aṣṭabhujasvāmin along with *cakra* and *chatra* There is a shrine of Śiva in the next chamber.[1675] The Antroli-Echaroli inscription of Nannarāja of the Rāstrakūta family and the Ellora plate of Dantidurga (r 745-56) bear the Garuda seal An inscription of Govinda III (808) testifies to his Vaisnava faith [1676]

The most famous Vaisnava temple of Mahārāṣtra is that of Pānduranga Viṭṭhala [1677] at Pandharpur Pilgrims flock to this

1674 Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, XLII, pp 163-7.

1675 *Brahmavidyā*, XXV pp 1-4, 520-1.

1676 *S V. U O. R. Journal* XII pp. 36-7

1677 The word, 'Viṣṇu' became 'Biṭṭi' in Kannada and 'Viṭhala' in Mahārāṣṭrī

temple from far and near: most of them, however, are from Mahārāṣṭra and Karnātaka. They worship Śiva in an adjoining shrine before offering their homage to Viṭṭhala. Neither any ritual nor philosophy governs the worship here Bhajan parties throng the temple

Though Viṭthala is Kṛṣṇa, the temple does not contain any shrine for Rādhā or any *gopī* A shrine of Rukmini appears to have been added in later years.

Mahārāṣṭra and Kannada saints have hymned Viṭṭhala. They include Jñānadeva, Nāmadeva, Ekanātha and Tukārām of Mahārāṣṭra and Purandara Dāsa of Karnātaka Nine kinds of *bhakti* are admitted by them [1678]

Śrī Cakradhara-svāmin (13th century), a disciple of Govinda Prabhu, composed *sūtrās* in Marāthī to expound a philosophy of *bhakti*. His ultimate categories were Parameśvara, Jiva, Devatā and the world Parameśvara is without form or attributes, but He descends to the earth to liberate the selves from bondage Five Kṛṣṇas are mentioned—Dattātreya, Kṛṣṇa of the *Purānas*, Kṛsna at Dvārakā, Govinda Prabhu and Cakradhara himself. His followers call themselves Mahānubhāvas, and they claim to have a philosophy representing a stage beyond any other school of Vedānta. *Bhakti* is the sole means of salvation, but it should be directed to Parameśvara and not Devatā [1679]

Jñāneśvara wrote a commentary (1290) on the *Bhagavadgītā* based on Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya*, but going beyond it by combining poetry, mysticism and philosophy It has become famous as the *Jñāneśvarī*.

As in Kerala, so also in Mahārāstra there is no clear-cut distinction between Vaiṣnavas and Śaivas There are some

1678 *Cultural Heritage of India*, IV pp 356-71

1679. International Congress of Orientalists, 1964. Summaries of Papers, pp. 96-8.

exclusive worshippers of Viṣṇu, but they are not alienated from other cults. Among the Vaiṣṇavas here differences of caste, creed and sex have no religious significance.

6. *Gujarat*

The Western Satraps and Maitrakas were the earliest known rulers of the Gujarat region. They were succeeded by the Pratihāras (750-850), Paramāras (972-1055) and Cālukyas (970-1185). Moslem rule began in the 13th century. The impact of their regimes is varied and complex.

Early rock-cut monuments in the area contain panels only of the river-goddesses, Gaṅgā and Yamunā. No cult deity is represented there. There is also no inscriptional evidence of Vaiṣṇavism The earliest surviving temples in Gujarat are small structures, simple in plan and design. A temple of Varāha at Kadwar near Prabhāsa Paṭan in Junagadh District dates from 650-700 A Viṣṇu temple of the tenth century at Sander (Mehsana District) shows the Solanki style in its earliest stages.[1680] A temple of Pradyumna is mentioned in the Lāṭa region in *Pādatāḍitaka*, a play by Śyāmalaka. The temples at Dwārakā and Dakore are reputed as hallowed by the presence of Kṛṣṇa. But the identity of ancient Dwārakā, the city built by Kṛṣṇa, is the subject-matter of debate. One view is that it was at Junagadh at the foot of Mount Girnar. Another locates it in Jamnagar District and dates a rebuilding in the 5th century [1681]

The people of Gujarat, where Jainism had considerable influence, are predominantly of the Vaiṣṇava faith. Śaṅkara's *māyā-vāda* does not appear to have appealed to them. They

1680. *Archaeological Remains*, pp 179-80.

1681. International Congress of Orientalists, 1964, Summaries of Papers V. Karmalkar, "Ancient Dwaraka and its location", p. 141. H D. Sankalia, *Antiquity of Modern Dwāraka*, p. 212.

seem to have preferred abundance of life to renunciation, the cult of Kṛṣṇa to that of Rāma. But the *Bhagavadgītā* is studied more than the *Bhāgavata* The path of devotion with ample provision for *prapatti* and *karmayoga* under the guidance of preceptors, is largely followed by people of all classes—businessmen, farmers and labourers.[1682] The lyrics of Narasimha Mehta, a Vaiṣṇava saint of the 14th century, have had immense influence on the people. Vallabhācārya's teachings are also popular. In recent times (19th century), a Vaiṣṇava cult founded by Śrīman-narāyaṇ in which the concept of God as Puruṣottama is important and where Rādhā finds a place, has exercised considerable influence.

7. *Madhya Pradesh*

The region in and around Madhya Pradesh is Central India. The Śungas, Ikṣvākus, Guptas, Gūrjara Pra ihāras, Western Cālukyas and Rāṣṭrakūtas were among its ruling dynasties.

There is evidence of the prevalence of Vaiṣnavism in this area from the 2nd century B C To this century belongs Heliodorus, son of Dion of Takṣaśilā and a Yavana ambassador from Antalkidas to Kāśīputra Bhāgabhadra He erected a Garuda pillar at Besnagar (ancient Vidiśa) and recorded an inscription on it There must have been a temple of Vāsudeva of which this is the *dhvajasthambha.*[1683] Another Garuḍa column, octagonal in shape, in a narrow Vidiśa street, states in an inscription that it belongs to a temple of Bhagavān, built by the devotee, Gautamīputra (*c* 140 A D) [1684] In the Udayagiri hills, one of the rock-cut caves (401 A D) is Vaiṣṇava.[1685]

1682. N A Thoothi, *Vaiṣnavism of Gujarat*, pp 60-75, 87

1683 J. N Banerjea *Development of Hindu Iconography*, pp. 102-3.

1684. *Brahmavidyā*, XXV Pts 3-4, pp 513 4

1685. *Ibid.* XXV Pts. 1 2, p. 3.

The Gupta emperors were Vaiṣṇavas They erected many monuments to their faith at Devagiri and other places. The *Daśāvatāra* temple is the work of skilled artists At Udayagiri, the images of Varāha and Anantaśāyin are of unsurpassed splendour.[1686] Near Irān (in the neighbourhood of Sagar) is a Mahāviṣṇu temple built by Candragupta II In it is a colossal image of Viṣṇu with those of Varāha and Narasimha on the right and left sides. An inscription here (484) in Brāhmī records the construction of a Nṛsimha temple with a *Garuḍa-dhvaja* in the front. Figures of Garuḍa adorn this column both in the front and at the rear The Garuḍa, holding a serpent in both the hands, has the emblem of *cakra* behind the head.[1687]

An earlier inscription of Samudragupta (*c* 330-75) in the same place records the erection of a Viṣṇu temple not found now Its plan has been reconstructed [1698] A Girnar inscription (455-8) of the reign of Skandagupta mentions the building of a temple to Viṣṇu under the name of Cakrabhṛt by Cakrapālita [1689]

The installation of an image of Viṣṇu as Anantasvāmin and Citrakūṭasvāmin, and the endowment of a village for the Deity are known from a Gadhwā inscription (467-8).[1690] Fifty years earlier (423) it is recorded at Gaṅgdhār that Mayūravarman, minister of Viśvavarman during the times of Kumāragupta, built a Viṣṇu temple [1691] Mention may also be made of the temples

1686 *Ibid.* XXVI Pts. 1-2, p. 9. See also *Studies in Indology* (Memorial volume to Mm Dr Umesha Mishra) Vol, I, p. 47.

1637 S K Bhuyan Commemoration Volume, p. 116,

1688 Cunningham's Report Vol II, Plate XXV. Archaeological Survey of India *Brahmavidyā*, XXVI. Pts 1-2. pp. 2-3.

1689, *Brahmavidyā* XXVI Pts 1-2, pp. 4-5

1690 *Ibid.* pp. 6-7.

1691. *Ibid.* p. 6.

of Janārdana at Iran (484) and of Bhagavat at Khoh (496 and 513). The latter two do not seem to belong to the Gupta regime.[1692]

The temples at Khajuraho near Gwalior (950-1050), patronised by the Chandellas, are noted for their artistic beauty. Among the sculptures there the figures of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmi and of Balarāma and Revatī deserve special mention.[1693]

This brief survey shows the prevalence of Vaiṣṇavism in this area from very early times and the patronage it received from kings at some times But there is no evidence of a community of Vaiṣṇavas; nor have temples of great antiquity survived.

8. *Rajasthan*

The Rajasthan region till recently was split into several small States like Mewad, Bhinnamālā, Valabhi, Jodhpūr and so on. It has a chequered history.

The Ghosundi inscription (1st century B C) in a place formerly in Udayapur State refers to a temple with a stone enclosure and called Nārāyaṇa-vāṭikā.[1694] It was dedicated to Saṅkarsaṇa and Vāsudeva A stone from a shrine known from the Morawell inscription mentions the images of *pañca-vīras* of the Vṛṣṇis there[1695] Here may be a reference to the *Vaikhānasa* concept of *pañca-vīras*, which seems hardly known outside South India. These inscriptions also testify to the worship of stone images from this early period

1692 *Ibid* pp 8-10

1693 *Ibid.* pp 11-12. See also Charudeva Sastri Felicitation Volume, p 542

1694 *Brahmavidyā* XXV, Pts 3-4, pp. 514-5.

1695. *Ibid*, pp. 515-6.

To the reign of Skandagupta (455-67) belongs a Junagadh inscription referring to a temple of Viṣṇu under the names of Śārṅgin and Cakrabhṛt.[1696] An almost contemporary inscription at Mandor represants the life of Kṛṣṇa in figures. One of 686 refers to Vāmana. A Jodhpur inscription of 868 invokes Hṛṣīkeśa. Ādiśeṣa, Keśava, Vāsudeva, Gokula and Narasimha are mentioned in a Mandor epigraph of before 1100 A D. The Daulatpur plates, inscription and the Samvādi copper plate of Cbāhmāna Ratnapāla (c 1264) show Vaiṣṇava leanings. There are references to Viṣṇu as Anantasvāmin and as protector. Kṛṣṇa's *līlās* are depicted in paintings at Jodhpur (1248). Inscriptions referring to Viṣṇu are found also at Ekaliṅga, Śṛṅgarṣi, Jaisalmer, Pushkara and other places.[1697] The temple at Osian is noted for its picturesque sculptures on Kṛṣṇa's life. Temples at Kekinda, Kirādu and Sādri depict the same theme [1698] The historical poem, *Jaivansh* (c. 1800) of Sitaram Chaturvedi, describes a temple of Kalkin now found in Jaipur.[1699] The Kṛṣṇa cult was popular with many ruling princes, as seen from the devotional lyrics of Mīrā, Vijaya Singh, Rāj Singh, Nagrīdās and Banī Themi The people were also devoted to Kṛṣṇa. Many illustrated manuscripts of the *Bhāgavata* are preserved in the art galleries of the region.[1700]

1696 *Ibid* XXVI Pts. 1-2, pp. 4-5

1697 Indian Historical Congress XVII. Session. R C. Agrawala, " Vaiṣṇavite Gleanings from the Medieval Inscriptions of Marwar ".

1698 (i) International Congress of Orientalists, 1964, Summaries of Papers, pp 227-8 (ii) *Studies in Indology* (Memorial Volume of Umesh Mishra), K V, Soundararajan, ' The Bhāgevata Cult in Rajasthan Temples". (iii) *B O R I*, XLII, 42-82 (iv) *Archaeological Remains*, Pt. 1, p. 170. (v) Cf *A I. U C*, 1959, p. 103.

1700 International Congress of Orientalists. Summaries of Papers, p. 22

1701 Vide *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, IV. 3. 98. and *Mahābhāṣya*, *Kāśikā* and *Nyāsa* on this *sūtra*

9 *East Punjab*

The Punjab from which East Punjab in India and West Punjab in Pakistan were carved out when India was partitioned in 1947, was in ancient times an ideal Hindu colony, the bedrock of Vedic culture. The rivers of the region are mentioned in the *Vedas*. In historical times it is known that the eminent grammarian, Pāṇini (*c*. 800 B C.), was born at Salatore near Attock in West Punjab Patañjali (150 B.C.) who wrote a great commentary on his work, belonged to this region. Both of them refer to the worship of Vāsudeva and Saṅkarṣaṇa.[1701] Pāṇini is said to have studied at Pāṭaliputra in Magadha. It is reasonable to hold that the cult of Viṣṇu under the name of Vāsudeva was prevalent then in the Punjab and Magadha. The records of Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador at the court of Chandragupta Maurya, show that it flourished in these regions in the 4th century B C. An inscription of Dionysos confirms this. The Mathurā region was its stronghold in late pre-Christian centuries[1702] Later, in the 5th century A D, the Tuśam inscription records the construction of two reservoirs for the house (temple) of Kṛṣṇa under the name of Bhagavat.[1703] An undated *praśasti* from Pehowa mentions the construction of a Visnu temple by the princely Tomara family[1704]

Under the influence of Iṣlam, Sikhism and modern reform movements like the Arya Samaj, the religious situation in the Punjab has drastically changed. and there is not much evidence of Vaiṣṇava influence today.

1702 International Congress of Orientalists, Summaries of Papers, S Jaiswal, "The worship of Sankarṣana-Baladeva". pp 132-3

1703 J Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and their Successors*. Vol. III, p 270.

1704. Buddha Prakash, *Aspects of Indian History and Civilisation*, p. 161.

10. *Kashmir*

Kashmir saw the luxuriant growth of Hindu culture in the past. Every branch of learning was cultivated It was the home of many disciplines like poetics and the *Tantra*. *Āgamas* of all kinds and the *Pāñcarātra* in particular could have originated here. The early *Ahirbudhnya* and *Pauṣkara Saṁhitās* and *Lakṣmī-tantra* contain evidence suggesting that they were compiled in Kashmir[1705] The *vyūha* cult under the name of "Vaikuṇṭha-caturmūrti" flourished in early times in Kashmir[1706]

The *Āgama-prāmāṇya* of Yāmuna (9th century) mentions a *Kāṣmīrāgama-prāmāṇya*.[1707] Śrī-vaiṣṇava tradition does not mention such a work by Yāmuna, though the context is suggestive enough. It will be, however, prudent to take it as the work of someone else until more evidence becomes available. In the meantime, the context indicates that in the 10th century the authority of the *Pāñcarātra* was admitted in Kashmir on the ground that the *Ekāyana* recension of the *Veda* was its basis Utpala and other writers on the *Spanda* system quote from named *Āgama* texts[1708]

Kashmir Vaiṣṇavism was a synthesis of many cults like the Vedic *Pāñcarātra*, *Sāttvata* and *Bhāgavata*.[1709] Its popularity is attested by the arguments of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa[1710] and Puṣkarākṣa[1711] in favour of the *Pāñcarātra*. Among the rulers

1705 *AhS*, XXVI. 75, XXIX 28; *LT* XLVI 38; *PauS*, XXXI 107-12. Consult the chapter on '*Pāñcarātra* Texts' earlier in this volume.

1706 R C Majumdar, *The Classical Age*, p. 418.

1707 *Āgama-prāmāṇya*, p. 79. This passage in quoted in *N.P.* p. 180. Van Buitenen takes it as the name of a work of Yāmuna.

1708 *Spandapradīpikā*, pp. 2, 40.

1709. S C Roy *Early History of Kashmir*, p. 184.

1710. *Nyāyamañjarī*, I. pp 241-2; *Āgamaḍambara*, IV. 62, 66.

1711. *Nyāyamañjarī-granthi-bhaṅga*, pp. 112-3.

of Kashmir, Pravarasena II (*c* 555), Candrāpīda (r. 712-20), Muktāpīḍa, Lalitāditya (r 724 60), Jayāpīda Vinayāditya (r 775-806) and Utpala Avantivarman (r. 855-83) were Vaiṣṇavas. They built temples to Viṣṇu under the names, among others, of Jayasvāmin, Avantisvāmin and Govardhanadhara.[1712] The cult continued to flourish in Kashmir till its occupation by Muslims in 1339. Kṣemendra, the well known Sanskrit writer, was a Vaiṣṇava and a pupil of Bhāgavatācārya Somapāda, though his father was a Śaiva. He called himself Vyāsadāsa.[1713]

11. *Uttar Pradesh*

The region comprised in Uttar Pradesh was ruled over at various times by Mauryas, Guptas, Maukharis, Harṣavardhana, Gahadawalas and others.

One of the earliest references to Vaiṣṇavism in this area is found in the inscription on the famous victory pillar of iron erected at Meharauli near Delhi by King Candra About his identity there is difference of opinion, though there is a tendency to identify him with Candragupta I.[1714]

It is said that images of Kṛṣṇa used to be made at Prabhāsa, southwest of Allahabad.[1715]

Shrines dedicated to Rāma, Kausalyā and others are found in Ayodhyā, but they are of recent origin. The only famous

1712 P. N Kaul, *History of Kashmir*, pp 183-4

1713 *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī*, pp 19-20, *A I,O C*, XXII Summaries of Papers. R Dattatray, " Vyāsadāsa, a name of Kṣemendra ", pp. 27-8

1714 R Satyanatha Iyer, *History of India*, I pp. 214-5 See also (i) S S Rana. " King Candra of Meherauli Iron Pillar Inscription ", Umesha Mishra Commemoration Volume, pp 669-75, (ii) S R Goyal, " Samudragupta and the North-West ", *A I O C*, XXII, Vol. II, pp. 153-68; and (iii) International Congress of Orientalists, Summaries of Papers, pp, 253 60.

1715. R. G Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism*, p. 64.

temple of some antiquity in the State is that of Badrinātha 10,000 feet on the Himalayas. This temple is closed for six months when it is snow-bound The *arcaka* there is a Nambutiri Brahmin from Kerala. It is said that the temple was reconstructed by Śaṅkara and that from his days the *arcakas* have been Nambutiris

The Vaiṣṇavas in this region are mostly followers of Rāmānanda, or they belong to subsects owing allegiance to him. They engage themselves in *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, and go on pilgrimages to sacred rivers like the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā

12 *Bihar*

Within modern Bihar lie the territories of ancient Vaiśālī and Mithilā and the kingdom of the Pālas. These were dominated by Buddhism for long Its influence on Hindu cults is not easy to assess. Most of the monuments in this area are Buddhist,

The Gupta and Maukhari kings patronised Vaiṣṇavism. The Guptas ruled from Pāṭaliputra, and their coins had the emblem of Garuḍa. King Anantavarman (*c.* 550) of the Maukhari dynasty inscribed in a cave in the Barābar hill in Gayā District that he installed an image of Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa.[1716] The Aphsad inscription (672) near Gayā mentions that Ādityasena built a temple of Viṣṇu.[1717] A feudatory of Dharmapāla (769-815) founded a huge Viṣṇu temple at Subhasthālī.[1718] The Vaigudar inscription records the installation of the image of Nārāyaṇa at Krimilā during the reign of Madanapāla (1143-62) [1719]

1716. *Brahmavidyā*, XXVI, pts 1-2, pp. 12-13.

1717. R, Satyanatha Iyer, *History of India*, I, pp. 281, 282, 288.

1718. R. C, Majumdar, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, p. 24.

1719. Buddha Prakash, *Indian History and Civilization*, pp. 204-5.

Gayā is one of the most sacred places for Hindus where they make offerings to the manes. The holy footprint of Viṣṇu, *Viṣṇu-pāda*, in a temple there is worshipped by Hindus all over India. No *śrāddha* ceremony is complete without reverential mention of Gayā, its imperishable banyan tree (*akṣaya-vaṭa*), the footprint of Viṣṇu and the Lord at the temple under the name of Gadādhara.

At Ranchi there are temples to Rādhāraṇī, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa. The temple at Jagannāthpūr is said to be the oldest[1720]

13. *Bengal*

Bengal was under the Guptas in the 6th century, but became independent under Śaśāṅka There followed periods of anarchy, until the Pāla dynasty rose. Even then, however, power rivalries and conflicts continued, and the rulers had little time to patronise religious cults Moreover, Buddhism had a dominant influence, so much so that there was a fusion between it and Hinduism. Still a little evidence is available about Vaiṣṇava influence.

A Baigrām copper plate (448) in Bogra District refers to a temple of Viṣṇu under the name of Govindasvāmin [1721] Sāmantasena's son, Vijayasena (*c.* 1100), wanted to avoid friction between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism and for this purpose built a temple to Pradyumneśvara His grandson, Lakṣmaṇasena, became a Vaiṣṇava [1722]

Some centuries later, Vaiṣṇavism became dominant in Bengal under the influence of Caitanya, who was inspired by the worship of Kṛṣṇa at Pūri He sponsored the worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in which there is a great deal of bridal mysticism. The *jīva* is conceived as a lover representing Śakti whose one

1720. Sakkari Mookerjee Volume. pp. 439, 441-2.

1721. *Brahmavidyā*, XXVI, Pts 1-2, p 9.

1722. R. C. Majumdar, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, p. 426,

form is Rādhā. It was influenced by the earlier cult of the *Sahaja-yāna* of the Buddhists which advocated living in accordance with Nature Unfortunately, it degenerated into licentious living.

In the Caitanya cult, it has limited applicability. A *jīva* has to feel itself to be a woman with reference to another *jīva*, and can have full freedom in love. This was treated as the *parakīya* aspect which, when practised, would become spiritual love as *Rādhā-bhāva*. The justification for this doctrine seems to be based on the love of married *gopīs* for Kṛṣṇa.

Caitanya himself does not appear to have advocated this kind of life for the devotees of Kṛṣṇa. His followers have expressed varying opinions. Jīva Gosvāmin held the relations between the *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa to be eternal The *gopīs* were wives of their husbands only through *yoga-māyā* Therefore, there is no *parakīya* aspect here. Rūpa Kavirāja and Rūpa Gosvāmin concede this. Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa and others argue that love must not be directed to a human being, as it cannot then become *rasa* Any deviations from the teachings of the masters tending to bring discredit to the cult, must be attributed to ignorance about them.

The cult of Gauḍa Vaiṣṇavism of the Caitanya school has spread far and wide throughout India. Branches of its Mutts are active in important cities, carrying on propaganda and performing *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. In recent times, the 'Hare Kṛṣṇa' movement as sponsored by the International Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Society and other organisations has spread abroad.

Brick temples began to be built in Bengal from about 1700 A D. At Bishnupur in Bankura District there are a group of such temples.[1723]

1723. *Archaeological Remains*, I, p. 189

14. *Assam*

Assam was known as Kāmarūpa in the past. The Pralambas, Pālas and Senas ruled over it up to the 13th century. Tāntrik Buddhism and the Śākta cult were dominant there.

The Vaiṣṇava movement became significant only under Śaṅkarānanda (1449-1568 ?). He was a poet, musician, singer and painter. Though a Śākta by birth, he became a Vaiṣṇava after extensive travels up to Rāmeśvaram, a meeting with Caitanya at Pūri and a study of the *Bhāgavata* under Jagadīśa Miśra. He began to worship a wooden image of Viṣṇu under the name of Madana gopāla and resolved to bring the people together by congregational prayer. In his prayer-house which he called *Nāma-ghar*, the object of worship was a book of prayers and not an image of Viṣṇu. All were allowed to participate in the prayer, including Moslems. The devotees were asked to render service to the holy book [1724]

Śaṅkarānanda's philosophy has for its central concept *eka-śaraṇa* or unswerving and exclusive devotion (to Kṛṣṇa) It is based on the *Gītā* and the *Bhāgavata* *Brahman* is identical with Puruṣottama, Parameśvara, Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva. The sentient and the insentient are not different from Him.[1725] The line of succession in preceptorship is not merely from father to son and from the older to the younger : it can also pass to some one deemed fittest to hold it.

His works include *Bhaktiratnākara* in Sanskrit, Kāmarūpi renderings of the *Mārkaṇḍayapurāṇa* and parts of the *Bhāgavata*, and *Bhāktipradīpa* in Kāmarūpi based on the *Garuḍapurāṇa*.

Among Saṅkaradeva's disciples was Mādhavadeva (1489-1590), a puritan who stressed devotion to God as the guiding

1724. *Cultural Heritage of India*, IV. pp 201-4.

1725. *Vaisnava Movement in Assam.*

star of mankind. Later, Anantadeva and Gopāladeva preached *dāsya* and *vātsalya* as indispensable to Vaiṣṇavas.[1726] Gurudeva Dāmodara (16th century), a saint from Assam and Cooch Behar, regarded *Brahman* as perfect, personal and impersonal, qualified and unqualified. He realised this in the manifested form of Kṛṣṇa [1727]

Frequent earthquakes and heavy rains seem responsible for the absence of ancient temples in Assam. Some idols however can be found here and there. There are two *dvārapālakas* at Badanga resembling Nara in the Nara-Nārāyaṇa panel at Deogarh. Images of Harihara and Viṣṇu, belonging to the eighth century, are at the State Museum. After the ninth century, many Viṣṇu images were made of basalt, sandstone and other kinds of stone. One of them (12th century) has Lakṣmī on one side and Sarasvatī on the other. In them Viṣṇu is named variously, as Keśava, Acyuta, Hṛṣīkeśa, Vāmana and Mādhava. At the State Museum can be seen various Narasiṁha idols of the 12th century of the *Sthānaka* variety and a fine Varāha discovered at Sibsagar [1728]

15 *Orissa*

In the past, Assam had close cultural links with Orissa. Vaiṣṇavism was patronised here under the Guptas. Under Choda Ganga Deva it struck firm roots. Kṛṣṇa was worshipped as Vāsudeva in the early days, as Gopāla-kṛṣṇa later, and still later, probably under the influence of Jayadeva's *Gīta-govinda*, as Rādhā-kṛṣṇa [1729]

1726. *Assamese Literature*, B K Barua.

1727. Dr. R. C. Goswami in "AICC XXVIII Summaries of Papers", p. 159.

1728. C N. Bhuyan, 'Medieval Sculptures of Assam' in "*Ṛtam*; K. S. A. Iyer Felicitation Volume", pp. 89-93.

1729. Dr. Harekrishna Mehtab, *History of Orissa*, II, "The Cult of Jagannātha", pp. 504-519.

One peculiar feature of Orissa Vaiṣṇavism is that it fused together the cults of Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Buddha and evolved the cult of Jagannātha in the temple at Puri.

Distinguished religious teachers like Rāmānuja, Narasiṁha Muni, Narahari Tīrtha, Caitanya and Śaṅkaradeva have visited this famous temple. Earlier Śaṅkara appears to have made an attempt to introduce the Śaivite from of worship, but not with much success. Some other teachers sought to make the temple exclusively Vaiṣṇava. The Nātha cult of Gorakṣanātha exercised influence on the *yoga* aspect of the worship here (Bhairavī was worshipped in the *sanctum* along with Jagannātha in the early days) Ultimately, we have a syncretist cult of Buddhism, Tāntrik features, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. This is borne out by many peculiar usages here. The idol is made of wood and is worshipped by Śabaras. No class or caste distinctions are observed in the temple. There is no prohibition of eating food touched or taken by others.[1730]

A study of the development of the temple suggests that in its earlier phases it was dedicated to Śiva and other deities. Jagannātha is comparatively late. The sculptures are notable for depicting erotic poses: this must have developed in feudal times from about the 10th century till the 13th [1731]

16. *Overseas*

When Hinduism spread beyond the seas in the early centuries of the Christian era Vaiṣṇavism also found strongholds there. Inscriptional evidence shows that the worship of Viṣṇu according to the *Āgamas* prevailed in foreign countries with Hindu colonies or under Hindu influence. Trailokyasāra was worshipped in Kambuja during the reign of Jayavarman

1730. R. K Maitra in J. N. Banerjea Volume, pp. 280. Also see D. M. Padhi's article in " AIOC XXI Summaries of Papers "

1731. Buddha Prakash, *Indian History and Civilisation*, pp. 323-6.

(657-81 A D) with the help of those proficient in the *Pāñcarātra—pāñcarātrārcanā cuncunā*. A Kambuja inscription of Yaśovarman (r 889-900) testifies to services in a Viṣṇu temple being regulated by Vaiṣṇava *Āgamas*. The *ācārya* is required to be proficient in *Pāñcarātra* and *Vyākaraṇa*. The terms, '*Bhāgavata*', '*Sāttvata*' and '*Vaiṣṇava*', are treated as synonyms. A Khmer inscription of Kambuja (1073) refers to one Kaviśvara-paṇḍita as observing the rules of the *Pāñcarātra* 1732 Inscriptions in other areas of Kambuja mention the image of Viṣṇu in a temple and also Varāhāvatara.

In Kambuja Viṣṇu in known by several names such as Hari, Acyuta, Nārāyaṇa, Upendra and Keśava. Śrī was also worshipped.1733 Images of Viṣṇu are found with Garuḍa and Lakṣmī.1734 At the capital, Angkor Thom, Sūryavarman II (1112-52) and his preceptor, Divākara Paṇḍita, were responsible for constructing the magnificant Angkor Vat a temple of Viṣṇu on the Dravidian model and representing the finest Khmer architecture 1735

In the Indo-china peninsula of Champa later known as Annam, inscriptions refer to Viṣṇu under the names of Nārāyaṇa, Hari, Govinda, Kṛṣṇa and Varāha 1736 His descents as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa were paid the greatest homage Another name of His was Tribhuvanākrānta 1737 His images are represented with four arms and riding on Garuḍa. Lakṣmī is

1732 B R Chatterji, *Indian Cultural Influence in Cambodia*, pp 39-167.

1733. N. R. Ray, *Brahminical gods in Burma*, p. 18.

1734. *Ibid.* p. 18. Such images are found in Java also.

1735. R. Satyanatha Iyer, *History of India*, I, p. 438.

1736. N. R. Ray, *Brahminical gods in Burma*, p. 18.

1737. R. C. Majumdar, *Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East*, I. Champa, p. 193.

known as Padmā and Śrī. In 731, King Vikrāntavarman installed her image.[1738]

In Burma Viṣṇu is known as Nārayaṇa The images of the ten descents of Viṣṇu are found in temples at Nat-hlaung Kyaung.[1739]

Suvarṇadvīpa (Sumatra) inscriptions refer to the temples of Dieng and Larājongrang. At the latter place are found panels depicting the *Rāmāyana*. There are references to hymns like the *Viṣṇu-pañjara* (which assures protection of all parts of the bodies of those who recite it and from different directions.[1740]

"There is a Syrian tradition," according to an eminent historian, "vouching for the existence of the Krishna cult in Armenia in the second century B.C"[1741]

This brief survey of the spread of Vaiṣnavism throughout India and in foreign countries gives some idea of its wide range and influence. Traditionally it has never been confined to any small region The main home of the early Hindus is described in our ancient works as Jambudvīpa It is said to have had nine divisions: Ilāvṛta, Harivarṣa, Kiṁpuruṣa, Bhārata, Bhadrāśva, Ketumālā, Kuru, Raṁyaka and Hiraṇmaya[1742] Viṣṇu is stated to have been worshipped under different names in these divisions: as Saṅkarṣaṇa in Ilavṛta, as Hayagrīva in Bhadrāśva and as Narasiṁha in Harivarṣa[1743]

Everywhere and at all times, the central concept that the Ultimate Reality is Viṣṇu with beneficent and auspicious

1738 *Ibid.* pp 194-5.

1739, N, R Ray op. *cit.* pp 22-3.

1740. Upendra Thakur, *Some Aspects of Ancient Indian History and Culture*, II, pp. 110-1, 223, 233, 243

1741. R. Satyanatha Iyer, *History of India*, I, p. 193.

1742. *V. P* II. 2, 12-14.

1743. C. R. Krishnamacharlu: *Cradle of Indian History*, p. 48.

qualities has never been lost sight of. The *Āgama* mode of worship has been followed wherever temples of Viṣṇu have been consecrated, though the rules of the text may not always be strictly observed and there may be a few variations in the procedure of worship. Except in many temples in South India where the *Vaikhānasa* system prevails, the *Pāñcarātra* has been adopted Many religious practices of the Hindus in India and in ancient colonies which are not traceable to the *Vedas* or the *Smṛtis*, are based on the *Āgamas*. The cult was not merely popular with the masses: it also attracted the patronage of rulers, noblemen and wealthy merchants who built temples and provided for their maintenance. It should also be noted that the patrons were almost always tolerant, showing no hostility to other cults, nor even denying them some contributions.

VAIṢṆAVISM AND MUSIC

The contribution made to music by Vaiṣṇavism needs to be noted. The theory of sonic creation conceives of absolute sound (*nāda*) as *Brahman*, from whom all sound emanates. Before becoming audible speech, sound has to pass through some stages. The *Tāntrikas* and musicians have been worshippers of *nāda*. This is one way of approach to God, Vide:

नाहं वसामि वैकुण्ठे
योगिनां हृदये न च ।
मद्भक्ता यत्र गायन्ति
तत्र तिष्ठामि नारद ॥

Those who take to music are declared to be the body of Viṣṇu:

काव्यालापाश्चये केचिद्गीतकान्यखिलानि च ।
शब्दमूर्तिधरस्यैतद्वपुर्विष्णोर्महात्मनः ॥

V.P. I, 22, 86.

It is even asserted that music excels all other forms of worship of God :

जपकोटिगुणं ध्यानं ध्यानकोटिगुणो लयः ।
लयकोटिगुणं गानं गानात्परतरं न हि ॥

Indian music is based on *Sāmaveda.* Its distinctive features are found in all Indian languages and all over India, though there is a division between Karnatic music in the south and the Hindusthani system in the north.

Tamil

In the Āzhvārs' poetic Tamil compositions, we have some of the early Vaiṣṇava songs on Viṣṇu Some of them state that they are to be sung [1744] Those who sing them are assured of reaching the Lord [1745] Nāthamuni (*c.* 900) collected the poems of the Āzhvārs and set them to music. But for a long time past, they are merely recited both in temples and houses, except in Śrīraṅgam and one or two other places where the *Araiyars* sing and dance to the accompaniment of musical instruments.

Among later compositions are the *kīrtanas* of Ūttukkāḍu Venkaṭa Subba Aiyar in praise of Kṛṣṇa, which are sung in *bhajanas* as prayer-offerings. The *Rāma-nāṭaka-kīrtanas* of Aruṇācala Kavirāya (*c* 1750) stand in a class by themselves. The principal incidents of the *Rāmāyana* (largely according to the Tamil version of Kamba) are depicted in songs set to *rāga* and *tāla.* Each *kīrtana* contains a proverb. Though the work is claimed to be musical drama, its songs are sung in concerts and used in dance performances.

1744. *Nācciyār Tirumozhi,* XII. 10; *Periya Tirumozhi,* II. 8-10; IX. 9 2, 10; *Tiruvāymozhi* VII 1. 11.

1745. *Periya Tirumozhi,* III. 3, 10; III. 4, 10.

Telugu

The earliest Telugu composer of songs glorifying Viṣṇu was Aṇṇamācārya of Tālapākka (1424-1504) in Cudappah district (of Andhra Pradesh) He was the first composer to divide songs into *pallavi*, *anupallavi* and *caraṇa*. Most of his compositions are in honour of Viṣṇu enshrined as Veṅkateśvara of Tirumalai. His grandson, Annaya, also wrote in a similar strain musical pieces marked by *śṛṅgāra* and conveying Vedāntic meanings. The Tirumalai hills are claimed to be the *Vedas* in the form of granite, and non-Vaiṣṇavas are strongly denounced. He also praises Rāmānuja and Viṣvaksena.

Kancarla Gopanna (*c.* 1650), famous as Bhadrācalu Rāmadās, was a Tahsildar; he was imprisoned for 12 years by the Moslem ruler for spending tax revenues on serving the Lord and His devotees. During his prison term he composed many songs in Telugu primarily on Rāma and Sītā. Rāma is said to have miraculously secured his release by paying off his dues to the king. Among these are a hundred known as *Dāśarathi-śataka*.

Tyāgarāja (1759-1857), the most famous composer in Karnatic music, was the son of a Telugu Brahmin, Rāmabrahmam, who had settled down in Tiruvaiyāru near Tanjāvūr. He is said to have had a vision of Rāma, after repeating His name in *japa* for ninetysix crores of times. A master of musical tradition and innovation, he expressed his ardent devotion in numerous Telugu and a few Sanskrit songs. Though a devotee of Rāma, he was not lacking in devotion to other *avatāras* or other gods. It is stated that he composed 24,000 *kīrtanas*, though only a fraction of them have survived He also wrote two operas, *Naukā-carita* dealing with the devotion of *gopīs* to Kṛṣṇa, and *Prahlāda-bhakti-vijaya* on the Lord's descent as Narasimha to bless His devotee, Prahlāda.

His contribution to Vaiṣṇavism through devotional music is rich, indeed magnificent. Throughout the Tamil country, his

songs are popular both with singers and listeners. The day of his death is commemorated by a musical festival at his birth-place. On specific occasions, some of his songs are sung in chorus.[1746]

Two contemporaries of Tyāgarāja were great composers—Muttuswāmy Dīksita and Śyāmā Śāstri. They were not devotees of Viṣṇu. But Dīksita has composed some beautiful songs about Viṣṇu.

Meraṭṭūr Venkataramaṇa Bhāgavata (*c.* 1800), a Tamilian, composed in Telugu the opera, *Prahlāda-carita.* It is enacted at Meraṭṭūr in Tañjāvūr district This work is in the dance-drama tradition. Its theme is the Lord's descent as Narasimha to protect Prahlāda.

Padas are songs in Telugu expressing devotion to God with an accent on bridal mysticism. Annamācārya, already referred to, and Kṣetrayya have enriched the repertoire of songs with many compositions of this kind. In dance concerts, Kṣetrayya's *padas* are often used.

Malayālam

King Svāti Tirunāl (1813-47) of Travancore, an ardent devotee of Viṣṇu, composed songs in Malayāḷam, Sanskrit and Telugu, praising Him under the name of Padmanābha, to whom the temple at his capital, Trivandrum, is dedicated. In them he calls himself the *dāsa* (servant or slave) of Padmanābha.

Kannada

Narahari-tīrtha, third in descent from Madhva, composed songs in Kannada praising Kṛṣna. His followers sang these and came to be known as "Haridāsas". They are divided into groups known as *Dāsa-kūtas* Śrīpādarāja, himself also the

1746. T. V. Subba Rao on Śrī Tyāgarāja in *Studies in Indian Music*, pp. 112-8, 127-49, 200-211, 216-20.

head of a Mutt, composed *Bhramaragītā*, *Veṇugītā* and *Gopīgītā* for musical rendering Kanakadāsa and the famous Purandaradāsa were the disciples of Vyāsarāya (16th century). Kanakadāsa, a shepherd, became a devotee of the Lord (Veṅkaṭeśvara) as enshrined in Tirumalai. Purandaradāsa, a rich merchant, became a mendicant on account of devotion to God. To him are attributed more than two lakhs of songs. He occupies an important position in the development of South Indian music.

Sanskrit

Nārāyaṇa-tīrtha, an ascetic saint, composed in Sanskrit the *Kṛṣṇa-līlā-taraṅgiṇī*, a collection of songs in praise of Kṛṣṇa. The musical setting is perfect, and they are marked by devotional fervour. Svāti Tirunāl, Muttuswami Dīkṣita and Tyāgarāja also composed songs in Sanskrit glorifying Viṣṇu.

Devotional music in South India in the four linguistic regions has been developed as the means for worshipping God, on the basis of the commendation in the *purāṇas* of singing the names and glory of God, as this is pleasing to God. They offer illustrations from the epics and the *purāṇas*.

Music is declared an element in the worship of God by the *Āgamas*, and temples use music as part of the ritual It is interesting that there are stone pillars in some temples serving as instruments of music. Among such temples are those in Tirumāliruñśolai, Āzhvār Tirunagari, Simhācalam and other places. The notes of the musical scale and of the conch can be produced by striking at the pillars. At Tirumalai, Bhadrācalam and Trivandrum songs are rendered as part of worship. At Kāñcīpuram in the Varadarāja temple is sculptured a figure of Kṛṣṇa playing on the flute. A sage is shown as playing on the *vīṇā* at Tirumayyam.

Mahārāṣṭrī

In Mahārāṣṭra, the worship of Viṣṇu under the name of Vithala or Viṭṭoba was popularised by Nāmdev (*c*. 1270),

Ekanāth and Tukārām (1608). In their songs in Mahārāṣṭri (and sometimes in Hindi) they teach the singing of the names of God as the way to salvation. They refer to the nine kinds of *bhakti*. Tukārām (b. 1608) wrote many songs: as they are in the *abhanga* metre, they are known by that name. His devotion to God (as Viṣṇu) was fervent and exclusive.

Gujarāti

In Gujarat, the influence of Vallabha is seen in the devotional lyrics on Viṣṇu. Narasimha Mehta (*c.* 1400) was at first a worshipper of Śiva. Through his grace, Mehta went to Dvārakā and had a vision of the *rāsa*-dance. After this, he became a Vaiṣṇava and began to write on the sports of Kṛṣṇa. In his *Suratasangraha* he describes himself as a messenger of the *gopīs* and Rādhā. His *Śṛngāramālā* is full of bridal mysticism. Similar are other works like *Vasantanapado* and *Hindolanapado*, His description of an ideal Vaiṣnava in his song, *Vaiṣṇava-janato*, was a favourite with Mahatma Gandhi who looked upon it as the authentic description of the traits of a Hindu devotee of God. Dayārāma (*c.* 1760) wrote many *Garbis*, mystic compositions expressing devotion to Kṛṣṇa [1747]

The disturbed political conditions in Gujarat in the 12th and 13th centuries on account of Moslem rule were unfortunate for the Hindus. The Jain rulers about this time also did not help them. It was Narasimha Mehta's songs that stirred up the religious spirit of the people and inspired a renaissance of devotional religion centering round Kṛsna that has not exhausted itself till now.

Hindi

In central and northern India the Rāmānanda cult with its stress on devotion and its accessibility to all without distinction

1747. K M Munshi, *Gujarati Literature*, pp. 124-29, *Cf.* *Śrī Vallabhacharya* by Bhai Manilal C. Parekh, IV.

of caste or creed was popular and prominent. Devotees and composers like Sūrdās, Kabīrdās, Tulasīdās, Mīrābāī came under its influence. Deep devotional fervour marks their compositions.

Sūrdās, blind Vaiṣṇava poet (16th century), is said to have composed 125,000 *padas* on Viṣṇu (primarily as Kṛṣṇa). The surviving ones are full of literary elegance. Kabīr is said to have been a Brahmin by birth brought up by a Muslim weaver in Benares. He does not seem to have had faith in any particular tradition. He was against idol worship, but his works suggest the influence of Āzhvārs. He refers to Mahārāṣṭra saints like Nāmadeva and Bīthala.

Mīrābāī (*c.* 1600), said to have been a Rajput queen, chose to worship Kṛṣṇa, calling Him Giridhara. Her songs are popular both in the north and south, and are sung even by followers of Nānak and Kabīr. Her songs and those of Kabīr generally form part of the *nāma-sankīrtana* in *bhajanas* [1748]

Haridāsa-svāmin, regarded as the divine descent of Lalitā, one of the eight friends of Rādhā, lived at Bṛndāvana. He was blessed with a direct vision of Kṛṣṇa whom he called Śyāmā-śyāma. For him music was the means of worship. He greatly influenced singers like Baiju Bāorā and Tansen and contributed to the development of musical tradition in North India.[1749]

Bengali

Vidyāpati (*c.* 15th century), the famous poet of Mithilā, composed songs on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.[1750] Caṇḍīdās of Bengal (14th century) was influenced by Jayadeva's *Gīta-govinda*. His

1748. H. H Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, pp. 98-100.

1749 "AIOC, Summaries of Papers", Dr. K. K. Brahmachari on "Haridāsa-svāmin", p. 211.

1750. D. C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, p. 142.

Kṛṣṇa-kīrtanā depicts the divine love of Rādha and Kṛṣṇa on the analogy of human love.

Govinda Dās (1537-1612), a follower of Caitanya, wrote songs in the mixed dialect of Brajabauli. They deeply influenced his contemporaries. Of other composers in a similar strain mention may be made of Yadunandan Dās (*c.* 1537) and Jagadānanda (*c.* 1650).[1761] Their works are called *padas*. *Kīrtanas* were composed in *Manohar Sahi* tune, set to music by Ganga Nārāyaṇ Cakravarti.[1762] They were sung to set tunes and they resemble South Indian *bhajana* songs.

The *Gīta-govinda* of Jayadeva (11th century), a musical and lyrical Sanskrit dramatic poem, was primarily responsible for the growth of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult. In the most elegant and melodious Sanskrit, helped by rhyme, alliteration and assonance, it depicts the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa In depicting their sports, the poetry becomes highly erotic, though it suggests that this is only symbolic of longing for and union with God. In everyone of its twelve cantos, the unit for singing to set tunes is a group of eight *ślokas*. The poem is also known as *aṣṭapadī*. It is used in *bhajans*, particularly those which celebrate Rādhā's marriage with Kṛṣṇa, and in dance concerts.

Assam

Śaṅkaradeva composed devotional songs called *Bargeet* in a mixture of Maithili and Assamese. His disciple, Mādhavadeva, wrote *Harajari-ghoṣa* All these are sung as *Nāma-sankīrtana* in the *Nāma-ghars* established by Śaṅkaradeva.[1753]

Orissa

Chanda and *janana* are the main forms of popular music in Orissa. They have influenced the *bhajana* form of worship

1761. *Ibid.* pp. 474-6.
1762. *Ibid.* p 496.
1753. Sukumar Ray, *Music of Eastern India*, pp. 132-45.

The former is a literary form, mixed up with popular music. The latter, addressed to God as Jagannātha, conveys the pain and suffering experienced in separation from God [1754]

SUMMING UP

Our survey of the *Āgama* literature has shown that many customs and forms of worship of the Vaiṣṇavas and even of Hindus generally cannot be traced to the *Vedas*: nor can they be pronounced anti-Vedic. Manu declares that the *Smṛtis* are also authoritative when they do not oppose or transgress Vedic declarations and injunctions. The *Āgamas* play a similar role. Uncompromising champions of the *Vedas* have to be sympathised with for failing to understand the spirit of the *Āgamas*.

Incidentally, we may refer to a problem raised by some scholars—that the Vaiṣṇava *Āgamas*, though not later than the *Śākta* ones, are dependent on them. The *Āgamas* belonging to the different cults derive ultimately from the *Vedas*. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* accords the highest position among the gods to Viṣṇu who is also identified there with the sacrifice. Śiva too has a significant position in the sacred rites.[1755] These two seem to be treated in the *Vedas* as not inferior to each other. Potency (*Śakti*) must have been deified and treated as an important deity along with Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The principles governing the three types of *Āgamas* exalting one or other of these three, are common to them all In view of the exclusiveness of each cult, it is reasonable to hold that these principles were derived from a common source. The epics show that in many respects Viṣṇu and Śiva do not have disparate traits. Inscriptions, edicts and grants in favour of a

1754. *Ibid* pp. 120-32.

1755 T A V Dikshitar, "The Vedic Sacrifices and Temple Worship" in *Bhāratīya Vidyā V*, pp. 62-70.

particular cult cannot prove that other cults had no followers in those regions. Moreover, the cults professed also could change from time to time on account of historical exigencies such as the patronage of princes and the rise of eloquent and charismatic teachers It is prudent to hold that the cults rose from a common source and developed independently, though not without exercising influence on one another.

The *Āgamas* are sometimes attacked on the ground that the concept of the idol is not Vedic and that idol worship does not have any Vedic support. This view is obviously untenable. In Vedic rituals, there is no worship as such, because the gods are invisible. Adoration requires a concrete form for the deity, and this has assumed the shape of the idol. The *Vedas* also have some descriptions of the forms of the deities. Moreover, the study of the practical side of the *Āgamas* will show that idol worship arose out of the necessity to enable people of all ranks to worship God. It is the failure to understand this that lies at the basis of such criticism.

The universal tendency to resort to concrete symbols is well brought out by Carlyle: "In the symbol proper, there is ever more or less distinctly and directly some embodiment and revelation of the Infinite. The Infinite is made to blend with the finite, to stand visible and, as it were, attainable there. By symbols accordingly is man guided, made happy, made wretched. He everywhere finds himself encompassed by symbols. The universe is but one vast symbol of God."[1758]

We have attempted only a study of one aspect of Hindu religion and culture. In India, culture, religion and language are extremely varied. Yet each of these has influenced the others. Separating them completely from one another is almost

1758. Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resortus*, p. 260.

impossible. They have preserved individuality, while permitting assimilation of external elements

In all the varieties of Hindu religion and culture, and in the variety of languages spoken, there is a golden thread of unity. The Hindu ethos is unmistakable. The *Vedas* represent the most ancient source for everything Hindu, religious or secular. The many recensions of the *Vedas*, the lengthy epics and *purāṇas*, the varied *Kalpa-sūtras*, the numerous *Dharma-śāstras*, the *upavedas* and the diverse systems of thought will be perplexing to those lacking interest and actuated by prejudice and self-complacency. Through all these however runs a golden thread connecting them so as to place each in its respective place, revealing to the scholar the unity in diversity. The efflux of millennia, the terrible onslaughts of foreign hordes bent on annihilating the native culture, and intimate political and industrial contacts with the West have not impaired this unity. Herein lies the secret of the continuity of Hindu tradition.

The study of one aspect of this tradition may create the impression that it is the only one that is important and worth studying. This is not because the others are not brought in here, but because all are but integral parts of one tremendous whole which seems vast and incomprehensible like the infinitude of God Himself. Hence this study is of a part only of that infinity which seems to defy comprehension.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABr.	Aitareyabrahmana
Ahs.	Ahirbudhnyasamhita
AV.	Atharva Veda
BBRAS.	Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society—Journal of
Bh.	Bhagavatapurana
BhG.	Bhagavadgita
BrUp.	Brhadaranyakopanisat
Chand Up / Ch.U	Chandogyopanisat
Com	Commentary
GOS	Gaekwad Oriental Series
IS	Isvarasamhita
JK	Jnanakanda (of Kasyapa)
JS	Jayakhya Samhita
KA	Kriyadhikara
LT	Laksmitantra
Mbh	Mahabharata
Ms	Manusmrti
Np	Nyayaparisuddhi
Pars	Paramasamhita
Pārs	Paramesvarasamhita
Pās	Padmasamhita
Paus	Pauskarasamhita
PR	Pancaratra Raksa
R	Ramayana
RTS	Rahasyatrayasara
RV	Rgveda
SA	Samurtarcanadhikarana
SBr / SpBr	Satapatha brahmana

Sks	Sanatkumarasamhita
Spra	Sriprasnasamhita
SR	Saccaritraraksa
SS	Sattvatasamhita
SV	Samaveda
SVOI	Sri Venkateswara Oriental Institute
SY	Sukla Yajurveda
TA	Taittiriyaranyaka
TBr	Taittiriya Brahmana
TS	Taittiriya Samhita
TU	Taittiriyopanisat
VK	Vimanarcanakalpa
VP	Visnupurana
VS	Visnusamhita
VIS	Visvamitrasamhita
VISS	Visvaksenasamhita
YS	Yogasutra

INDEX

List of Works Cited

LIST OF WRITERS

GLOSSARY

abhaya : pose of the hand of the icon conveying freedom from fear for the devotees.

abhicara : rite done for a malevolent purpose.

abhigamana : morning worship.

abhyavaharika : relating to food preparations and their offerings.

acamana : sipping water with the utterance of mantras.

acamaniya : one of the kinds of attendance (upacara).

acarya : spiritual preceptor, director for guiding temple construction and installation ceremonies.

adhikarana : section in the Purva mimamsa sutras and Brahma sutras treating a particular topic.

adhvan : stage in the manifestation of Sakti.

adhvaryu : sacrificing priest following the yajurveda.

adhivasa : preparatory rite to invoke the presence of the deity in an icon before worship.

agneya : belonging to Agni, a term used by the Vaikhanasa texts te refer to the Pancaratra Agama.

ahnika : routine of work to be carried out during the day.

aisvarya : lordship

akarsana : attracting an absent person into one's person by mantras.

aksasutra : a string of rosary seeds.

amurta : not having corporeal form.

anganyasa : nyasa done on a limb of the body.

angulinyasa : nyasa done on fingers.

antaryaga : mental (or inner) worship.

antaryamin : inner controller.

anuyaga : partaking the food offered to god.

aparahna : the fourth part of the day time.

aprakrta : non-material, not a product of matter.

aradhana : worship of God.

arani · piece of wood for kindling fire.

aratrika · waving of light before the idol.

arca : idol for worship.

arcaka : priest officiating for offering worship to God in temple.

arghya : water offered to the deity or guest as the first item of attendance.

arthavada · glorificatory passage not to be taken literally.

asana : posture : sitting posture of the idol.

avabrtha : ceremonial bath in the concluding session of a sacrifice performed on the last or ninth day of festival in the temples.

avahana : invoking the presence of the deity.

avatara · divine descent of God

bahiryaga external worship

bala strength.

balibera : name of one of the idols in temples used for offering the daily oblations.

bhagavata a devotee of God

bhogasthana · places of enjoyment.

bhogopakarana . means of enjoyment.

bhupura : common edging in the yantra.

bhutasuddhi · The process of mentally purifying the elements constituting the human body and creating a pure one.

bija : essential syllable in a mantra

bindu : concentrated and undifferentiated part of Sakti just about to create

brahman · the priest of the Atharvaveda

brahmandakosa : the fifth stage in creation representing the evolution of the samkhya categories

carya name of the fourth division of Agama text, action.

caturatmya : group of the four vyuha deities constituted together for worship.

ciccbakti sakti manifested through the self.

devalaka : those who earn their livelihood by worshipping God.

dhruvabera : idol which is permanently fixed in the garbhagrha of the temple.

dhupa : offering of incense.
dhvajarohana : mounting the flag in the flag staff marking the commencement of the festival.
dhvajasthamba : flag staff.
dhvajavarohana : bringing down the flag in the flag staff marking the conclusion of the festival.
diksa : Initiation,
diksita · one who gets initiated.
dipa · light waved in the presence of an idol.

ekantin : exclusively attached to a single deity.
ekantidharma : the trait (nature) of the ekantin.

gatha : verse not belonging to the Vedas.
garbhagrha : sanctum sanctorum.

havis : offering, especially of food preparation, to the deity.
hotr : priest of the Rgveda,
hrdyaga : mental worship.

ijya : act of worship.

jagrat : waking state.
japa : mental repetition of mantra or the name of God,
jivakosa : last stage of creation representing emergence of all animate beings.
jnana : first part of the Agama text containing the knowledge of ultimate Reality.

kainkarya service to God, elders.
kaivalya . self realisation.
kala : pure manifestation.
kalpadevalaka : those who earn their livelihood by worshipping God after getting initiated.
karanyasa : nyasa done on one hand with another.
karmabera : idol receiving daily worship.
karmadevalaka : those who earn their livelihood by worshipping God without getting initiation.
kalasa : pitcher.

katihasta · hand pose of the icon, the hand touching the waist.

kosa : form assumed by Sakti.

kriya · third division of the Agama text—dealing with the construction of temples and installation of idols.

kumbya utterance to ensure good conduct

kutastha purusa · purusa in the collective sense of all selves.

lilavibhuti : manifestation for sport.

mahotsava : annual festival in temples

manasayaga inner worship.

mandala : circular design to concentrate divine powers.

manipravala . admixture of gem and coral, referring to the use of Sanskrit and Tamil expressions in Vaisnavite writings.

mantra · spiritual formula

mantra nyasa : nyasa bringing fitness to worship.

marane : rite to kill the unwanted person.

matrka : letters forming part of mantra

matrkapitha : pedestal for matrkas.

mayakosa : second stage in creation marking the beginning of material creation

mudra hand pose

mula bera : principal idol fixed permanently in the garbhagrha of the temple

mulaprakrti primordial matter.

murta : having corporeal form.

nada . indistinct sound possessing light.

nadi tubular duct.

nadika : duration of time equivalent to that of 24 minutes.

naivedya : offering of food preparations to the deity.

nigada : words used simply to address (call) another.

nirmalya . remnant of sandal, garland and others already used for God.

niskala · partless

nityavibhuti : highest place of glory of God.

nityodita ever manifest.

niyata : inner controller.

nyasa : self surrender, mental process of infusing potency into the object by touching it.

pancakala : five fold division of the day.

pancaratrika : follower of the pancaratra tradition.

pancasamskara : five fold consecration.

para : supreme form of Visnu.

parathayajana : worship offered to the deity for the sake of others, done in temples.

paricaraka : assistant to the priest in the temple.

parisecana : sprinkling of water around the food served for eating.

pasa : bondage.

pasu : living being.

pati : Lord.

purusartha : aim, pursuit in life.

pausaka karma : rite conducive to welfare.

pavitraropana : decorating the idol with pavitra, a garland of nice threads of various colours.

pinda : consonants occuring between bija and other letters.

pistapasu : effigy of the animal made of flour.

prabandha : any literary composition, Nalayiradivyaprabandha in Vaisnavism

prajna : state of deep sleep

prakara : enclosure in a temple.

prakasa : illumination or manifestation.

prakrtikosa : a stage of Sakti in which the gods get their consorts

pranapratistha : installation of life in the yantra or idol, God's taking His place there

prapatti : self-surrender.

prasutikosa : a stage of Sakti out of which the deities issue forth.

pratima : idol.

pratas : the first part of the day time.

pratistha : installation of the idol.

pratyabhijna : recognition.

pradurbhava : descent of God Himself

pradurbhavantara : descent of parts or portions or anything which belongs to God.

prayascitta : act of expiation

pundra : the ornamental mark worn by a devotee.

purascarana : preparatory rite.

purvahna : the third division of the day time

puspayaga worship of God with flowers.

putraka : second kind of aspirant requiring initiation.

sadgunya : group of six qualities.

sadhaka : third kind of aspirant requiring initiation.

sakala : having parts

sakti : potency.

saktikosa : the stage or body of Sakti which is concerned with suddhasarga.

saktipata : descent of God's grace.

salokya : state of moksa in which the self coexists with God.

samadhi : undisturbed resting of the self in God.

sangava : second part of the day time.

samhara : withdrawal of speech.

samharanyasa : nyasa done to create dissolution.

samkranti : the time of transit of the sun from one to the next division of zodiac

samipya : fellowship with God.

samjna : name of the deity occurring in the mantra.

sampradaya : tradition.

samproksana consecration

samyama : performance of good deeds for the benefit of the Brahman

santa : inactive.

santika rite for removing the evils.

santodita : periodically manifest.

sarupya : transformation of the body, divine in appearance.

satkaryavada : theory that the effect has prior existence in the cause.

sattvata : follower of the Pancaratra.

samayin : the first kind of student who begins to get initiated.

saumya : gentle, Vaikhanasas refer to themselves by this word.

sayam : the last part of the daytime

sayana : reclining posture of the idol.

sayujya . intimate union.

sesa : subordinate to God

seva : service.

snapana : giving bath to the idol.

snapanabera : idol getting bath.

spanda : vibratory movement.

srstinyasa : nyasa done to create potency

sthiti : standing posture of the idol.

sthitinyasa : nyasa done to secure potency.

svadhyaya · study of one's Veda.

svapna : giving bath to the deity.

svarthayajana : worship for one's self, done in the house.

svayamvyakta : a holy place or shrine which manifested by itself.

subhasraya : idol, seat of the auspicious one (God)

suddhasattva : pure sattva without any tinge of rajas and tamas.

susupti . deep sleep

taijasa : dream state.

tanmatra : subtle element.

tapa : marking the upper part of the arms with heated emblems of conch and discus

tejas : splendour, might.

tirodhana sakti : God's power to make the self loss the real knowledge.

turiva : transcendental stage

turiyatita · the stage beyond transcendence.

uccatana : rite to ruin an adversary.

udgatr : priest of the Samaveda.

udita : active.

unmesa : awakening of Sakti.

upabrahmanam : supplementary to the Vedas.

upacara. attendance.

upadana : collection or gathering of the materials for worship.

upanayana : investiture with the sacred thread.

utsava · festival.

utsavabera : bera used during festivals.

varamudra · hand pose representing the grant of boon.

vibhava · divine decent

vibhuti : prosperity of God.

vidvesana : rite to control the enemies.

vimana : structural part of the temple containing the main shrine.

vimarsa : self consciousness of the Supreme Being.

virya : virility.

visarga : aspirate sound.

visarjana : sending away (of God).

visva : waking state

vyuha : self division.

yajamana rich man who undertakes the work of construction of temples.

yantra : metallic plate containing diagrams with the letters constituting the mantra of the deity written on specific places in the diagram.

ERRATA

Page	*f. n. Line*	*for*	*read*
58	1	Bagchl	Bagchl
131	1	485	435
173	1	VS	VISS
175	9	GS	IS
186	3	T. N. Banerjee	J. N. Banerjee : development of Hindu iconography
198	4 & 6	TV	TA
227	3	AbE	AbS
231	1		delete JS
241	*t. L.* 27	kata	kala
254	1	ViS	VISS
308	*t L* 30	hogvapakarana	bhogopakaıana
343	2	SVVORI	SVWORI
346	18	X 72	XIII. 48
351	9	TS	IS
	13	ParS	Pas
354	7	SKA	SKS
360	4	ISS	VISS
361	9		delete VS XII. 48
362	7		delete VS. VI. 67-85
363	5 & 10	ViS	VISS
	9	VSS	VISS
365	1	VSS	VISS
	7	VIS	VISS
366	14	Päs	Pas
367	6	VS	VISS
368	2	VIS	VISS
384	6	VIS	VISS
395	3, 4, 7, 10, 12 & 13.	ViS	VISS
396	6	ViS	VISS
400	11	TS	IS
401	6	VIS	VISS
403	10	VIS	VISS
427	3	ViS	VISS
487	4	S.V.U O.R.	SVWORI
498	1	Sakkarı	Satkari

f. n. = foot-note *t. L.* = text line.

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